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## STAFF


**Publisher/Art Director**
Pierre Ouellette

**Editor-in-chief**
Marc-Alexandre Vézina

**Production Staff**
Dominique Durocher ... Illustrator/Modeler/Writer
Martin Ouellette ... Writer/Modeler
Ghislain Barbe ... Illustrator
Marc-Alex Vézina ... Writer/Modeler

**Contributors**
Gene Marcil ... Writer
Stéphane Matis ... Writer
Prabal Nandy ... Writer
Bryant Velez ... Illustrator

**Layout**
Dominique Durocher

**Proofreading**
Jean Carrières, Judith Lanouette
Jimmy Mah

**Translators**
Miyako Graham, Daishi Saeki

**Administration**
Robert Dubois (advertising)
Claude J. Pelletier (distribution)

**Photography**
Elie Charest, Dominique Durocher
Marc-Alex Vézina

**Linotronic/Color Separation**
Typo Express, Inc

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Payette & Simms, Inc


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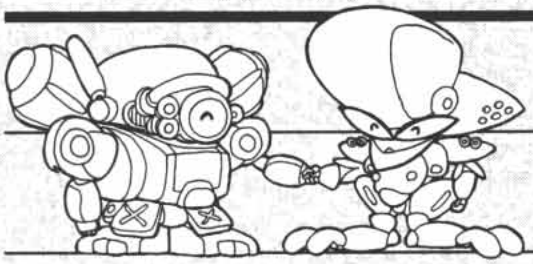

# THE MECHA INVASION

You may have noticed that this issue contains quite a wealth of information on three series that you did not see anywhere: **Jovian Chronicles**, **Heavy Gear** and **Moonlight Mechanix**. All three have something in common, though: they are all games produced (or that will be produced) by the Dream Pod 9 team.

Before you burn us at the stake for using Mecha Press as a mega-advertising vehicle, let us explain the reason behind our choice of subject. Mecha Press is first and foremost a magazine dedicated to mecha, or the Japanese concept of the hi-tech vehicle — which most often shows up in the form of a giant, pilored robot. It does not matter which medium is used; anything relating to them is welcome, games, animations, models, movies, etc. We thought that our creations were just as worthy of these pages as the ones from the Japanese studios. We hope everyone out there agrees with us...

Even as we reserved a large number of pages to mecha gaming, we scheduled several anime features for those of our readers who buy the magazine for its anime content. The series chosen were two that rank among the staff's favorites, but did not receive as much attention as other, more popular shows like **Gundam** or **Macross**: **Hades Project Zeorymer** and **Detonator Orgun**. Both these series will be covered at greater length in a future "OVA Special" issue. Also, our synopsis features the next installment of the **VOTOMS** episodes begun last issue.

*The Basics of Mecha Modeling* series continues with Part II, which examines the tools of the trade. Also, we have reviews of mecha models and miniatures. To top it all off, we invite you to turn to page 42 for the return of *Engineering Outlook*, an article series which was voted as one of the most popular features of the magazine when we did the Mecha Press poll a few months back.

What do any of these articles have to do with a mecha invasion, you ask? Is it not the usual subject of the magazine? Yes it is, but consider the number of media which are featured in our pages. Now go out and look around you: news reports about the walking truck of the Americans, video games featuring either mecha or powersuits, comic books or science-fiction novels in bookstores. The concept of the walking, driven robot or armor, once considered kid stuff, is now entering our popular culture *en masse*.

Could the real thing be very far behind? Time will tell. For the moment, let's just enjoy our interest in the mechanized, even if it is only fiction. After all, there are no technological or economic limits to our imagination, is there?

Marc-Alexandre Vézina

**Marc-Alexandre Vézina**

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### ILLUSTRATIONS

Ghislain Barbe ..... 3-4, 8, 14-17, 19, 26, 32-34, 36, 47.

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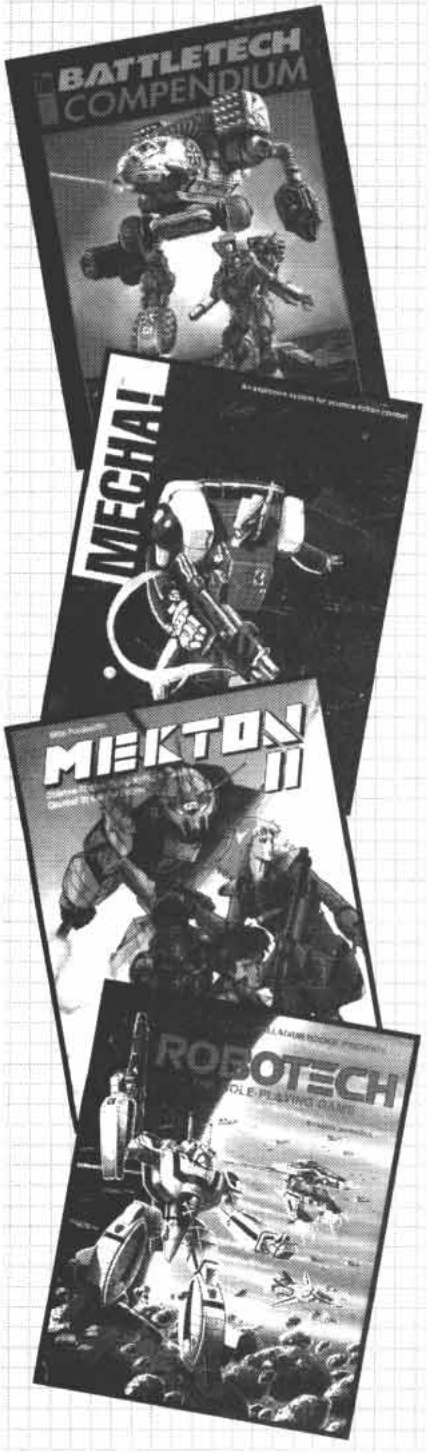
# MECHA GAMING

by Marc A. Vézina




**The need for recreation and leisure is at least as old as Mankind itself; archaeologists and anthropologists have found toys and dice throughout the periods of History. In the last twenty-five years or so, a very old free-form of gaming was institutionalized: it was, of course, roleplaying, or the "Let's pretend" game all children play at one point or the other.**

Roleplaying, in its modern form, first developed from another age-old game: the wargame. Wargames have been used to entertain young men, and later, to teach them the rudiments of tactics and strategies they would one day need to know and use. Toy soldiers were found as far back as the ancient civilizations of the Middle East.

From wargaming came the idea of really following the exploits of a more select group of adventurers instead of those of an army. This concept led to the first true RPGs, amongst which (but not limited to) **Traveler®**, **Dungeons & Dragons®**, and many others. These games still retained some of the characteristics of their wargaming ancestry: life points, standardized opponents and simple plots. With time, more games appeared, and new gaming engines. Some were highly realistic, others were action-packed. All genres, from SF to fantasy to horror, were soon covered.

The Japanese mecha began to influence North American sci-fi gaming in the early 80s. It was the blissful time of series like **Robotech®**, which had enormous success in the United States and in Canada. It soon became a hit RPG published by Palladium Books®, and continues to be so today. The year 1984 saw the humble beginning of the **Battletech®** juggernaut, which can now safely be crowned as the "king of the mecha games".

The early 1980s also saw the arrival of **Mekton®**, which was directly inspired by Japanese anime and its peculiar characteristics. Although the game remained an underground sensation for many years, the 1987 second edition **Mekton II®** truly brought the game out in the mecha fighting arena. The promised 1994 third edition, **Mekton Zeta™**, will surely prove very popular.

A new contestant entered recently in 1992 with **Mecha!®**. Seventh Street Games, a group of young mecha enthusiasts from California, published the action-packed game after "watching too much anime". Although not widely distributed, the game enjoys solid fan support.

Last, but not least, the **Heavy Gear™** game universe from Dream Pod 9 is now out along with its companion card game **Heavy Gear Fighter™**. Both games have been extensively promoted in the last few months, so there is very little to add. Turn to page 14 for more information.

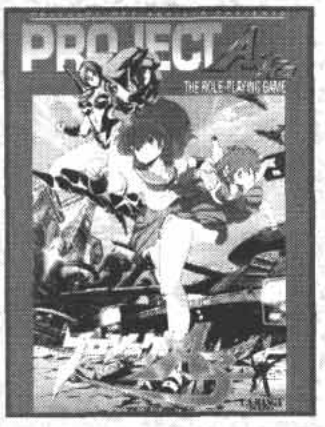
So what does the future hold in store for mecha gamers? As the concept of the piloted humanoid vehicle becomes more feasible and enters our popular culture, we will see more and more of it. Take for example the recent announcement of a prime-time **Battletech®** animated series. The age of mecha has begun.



Raymond P Campiglia (Order 33181648)

# MECHA-PRESS NEWS

## PROJECT A-KO™: THE ROLEPLAYING GAME




**Project A-Ko™**, first the second most hyped Japanese anime after Akira™, now the ultimate sourcebook and RPG! Enter the wacky world of PAK as you meet super-powered heroines, dashing mechanized action, strange alien women from beyond known space and most of all... Non-stop comedy and laughs!

**Project A-Ko™: the RPG** is a sourcebook which includes the complete, easy to understand **Silhouette-A™** rules. In addition, the book contains complete character occupations, lots of background and locations data (often for the first time in English), and lots of all new adventures.

The book also includes the exciting new **Anime Fighter™** combat card game that allows players to fight as only A-Ko™ or B-Ko™ can. And as a special bonus, the book offers the **Project A-Ko™ Collector Cards** series: 18 full-color cards with game information on the back.

Coming in October from Dream Pod 9. A must for gamers and anime fans alike!

## MEKTON MECHA MANUAL VOLUME 1

The first in a series of mecha manual from R. Talsorian Games, Inc, the **Mekton Mecha Manual Volume 1** contains 24 different mecha designs from 12 new "background" universes. Covering power levels from basic war machines to star-powered world-smashers, the **MMM Vol. 1** demonstrates the range of mecha which you can build with the **Mekton** system.

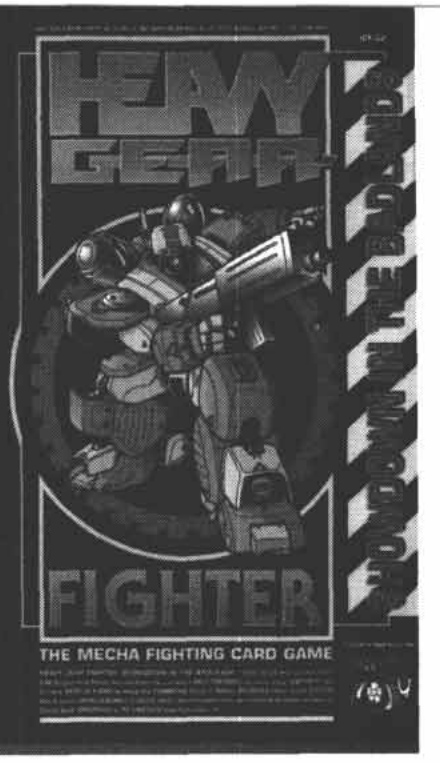
The statistics included are for the upcoming third edition **Mekton Zeta**, but they are usable with **Mekton II**. Each mecha comes with illustration, game stats and short essay on its universe of origin.

**Mekton Mecha Manual Volume 1**, written by the RTG staff, 48 pages, published by R. Talsorian Games, Inc.

## *WIN A MADCAT!*

## CONTEST GOING FAST!

Mecha Press/Horizon Hobbies' *Win a Madcat!* contest is coming to a close. Don't forget that you had only until September 1st, 1994 to send us a letter where you outlined your favorite modeling trick in about a hundred words or less. The lucky winner of our draw will receive a signed copy of the vinyl Madcat kit by Horizon.




## HEAVY GEAR FIGHTER

**Heavy Gear Fighter** was released at GenCon and is currently one of the hottest mecha games around. Following on the game's popularity, some entirely new cards can be found in this issue's central insert, along with the rules to use them! Turn to page 26!

## JOVIAN CHRONICLES MINIATURES

The Jovian Chronicles miniatures are finally here. Sculpted by Stephen Koo, these multi-part pewter kits can be used either for gaming or for display. Six different models, all from the first book, are now available. Expect a complete presentation and review in our next issue.

## ERRATA

We forgot to mention that the mecha design we used for our Battletech feature in MP13 was originally the DD-1 Battlemover from Bubblegum Crisis, Episode 5. It is not an original design. Our apologies to all anime fans...



Raymond P Campiglia (Order - 3318648)

# DREAM POD 9 GOODS

Dream Pod 9 has recently started offering goods relating to its gaming worlds. The first four items are the **Heavy Gear** metal pin and T-shirt and the **Jovian Chronicles** and **Europa Incident** calendars.

## Heavy Gear Pin:

Dream Pod 9 has designed this BIG 1 1/4" X 2" metal pin just for the **Heavy Gear** fans and players. It reproduces the game's logo and design, along with a Hunter heavy gear, skillfully crafted on three levels on very detailed hard pewter. It also has a hand-polished old metal finish and is equipped with two mounting pins for more stability.

## Heavy Gear T-shirt:

This attractive black cotton T-shirt sports the Heavy Gear logo and Hunter in white on the back, with a smaller version of the Dream Pod 9 logo on the front over the left breast. Only available in X Large size.

## Jovian Chronicles Calendar:

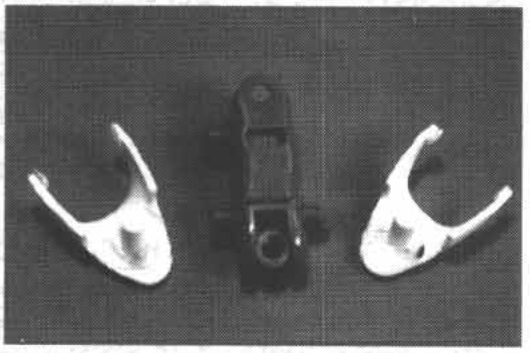
This 8 1/2" X 11" full color wall calendar features 7 illustrations by John Moscato from the world of the Jovian Chronicles.

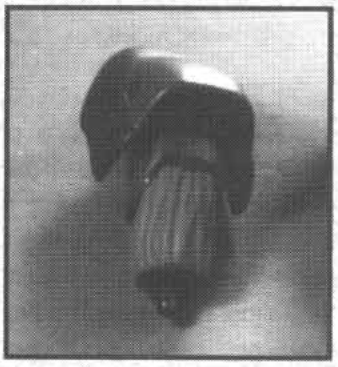
## Europa Incident Calendar:

This 8 1/2" X 11" full color wall calendar features 7 illustrations by Ghislain Barbe from the world of the Jovian Chronicles.

# PATLABOR MODELS SUFFER FROM CHEMICAL DISEASE

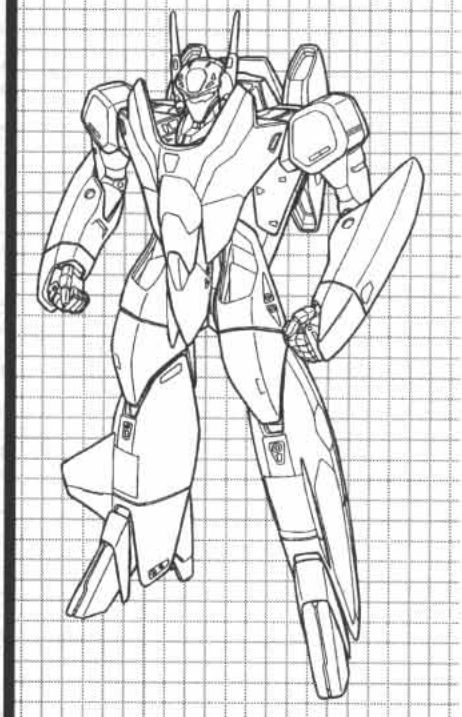
It was found by our modeling team that the latex used as articulation-covering sheaths on the Bandai 1/60 plastic Patlabor model kits chemically reacts with the kits' plastic, making it soften and melt slightly over an extended period of time. The effect was noticed on painted and unpainted models alike. The plastic has been eaten even through five layers of enamel, a very tough surface indeed.





No solution have been found so far, other than replacing the latex sheaths with cloth ones. Patlabor modelers are advised to check their models for signs of damage. If damage did occur, remove the sheaths, the plastic will reharden by itself, allowing repairs to be made with putty.

Modelers should be extremely cautious with the new Movie II Ingram, since its whole torso is covered by a latex armor vest!

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# WHAT'S JOVIAN CHRONICLES?

By Martin Ouellette

What exactly are the **Jovian Chronicles**? It is a complete science-fiction universe for roleplaying, with big piloted robots and epic battles, but that's not all **Jovian Chronicles** is about. No, the Chronicles are also a mix of ambition and dreams, our dream of doing something as close to the **MS Gundam** "feel" as possible, without making it a spoof or a parody.

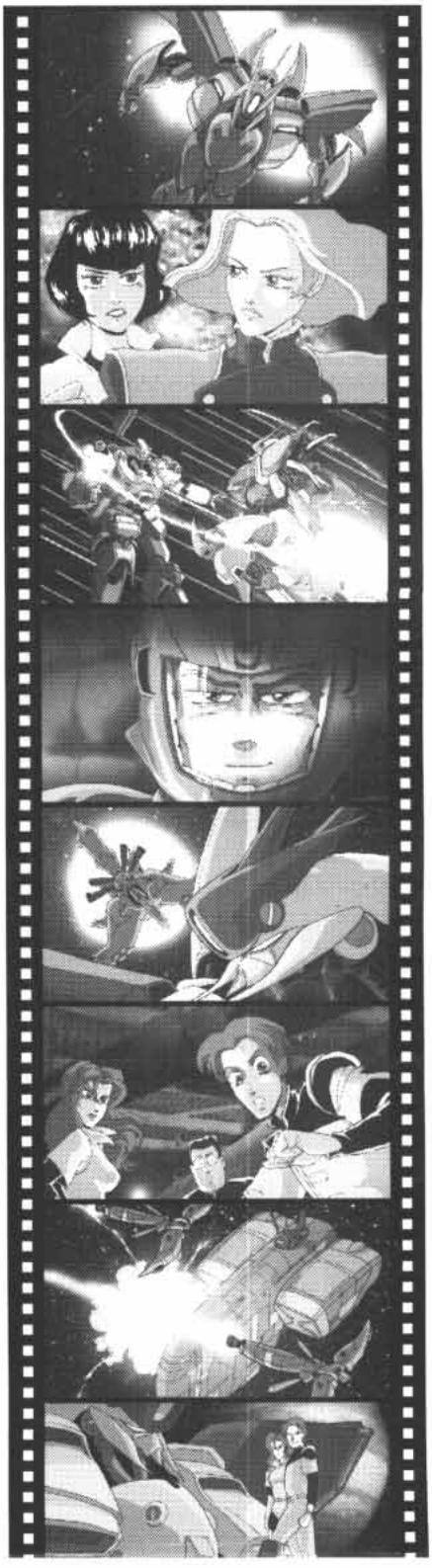
It all started out as a serial project for the pages of Mecha Press. The Chronicles were to be published in short two-page installments similar to the novels published in Japanese magazines such as **Newtype**. The original goal was to make the story as realistic as possible: the mecha weren't even humanoid at that point. As the story took shape and evolved, we came to realize how hard it would be to write up and publish such a novel, even in episodes. However, since we had all this great background material and since we had just acquired the **Mekton** license, it seemed natural to translate the Chronicles to a game.

Many of us (especially the mecha designers) are great fans of **Gundam** so it is no coincidence that the Prometheus echoes the Dendrobium, the Dragonstriker the Neue Ziel, or the Cerberus, a Gelgoog/Marasai composite. People should not see this as a mere lack of imagination, but rather as admiration for the look and feel of the mobile suits. We wanted, in our own small way, to imitate the like of Makoto Kobayashi, Kunio Okawara or Hajime Katoki and somehow, to generate in others the sense of wonder they generated in us.

We wanted to demonstrate that something as good as **Gundam** could be produced by North Americans and still be just as interesting. Of course, now that the demonstration is done, the two universes are slowly diverging, with new and totally original material being created for the Chronicles. The **Europa Incident**'s adventure on Europa is one such example. Of course, the atmosphere, the "feel", will remain similar to **Gundam**'s.

But why choose **Gundam** as an inspiration? Why not **Macross**, or any other series? Mainly, it was because of the seriousness and "realism" of the Gundam saga. Of all the giant robot shows it was the one we figured was most likely to represent our future should we humans decide to build giant space stations and mecha. Although inspired by the creation of Yoshiyuki Tomino, **Jovian Chronicles** goes a bit further; it covers more than half the Solar System (from Mercury to Jupiter). It does not feature any psi powers or "newtypes", and primarily focuses on political confrontations and adventures.

The story and the universe of the Chronicles were in the work for two years before finally being published. Without knowing it, we created a universe so wide and with so many different levels that it could interest all science-fiction fans, be they anime enthusiasts or roleplayers. The next few pages offer but a glimpse of the Chronicles themselves; if you like them, we will have attained our goals.





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# JOVIAN CHRONICLES OVERVIEW

By Martin Ouellette
and Marc A. Vezina

**The story of the Jovian Chronicles is the story of the human race in the 23rd century. However, science has not progressed to the point where one can teleport or go faster than light; a twentieth century person would recognise just about every technological item used.**

**The Chronicles are set in the year 2212. The first introductory campaign, which helped shape a great deal of the world, took place in 2210. Called the Odyssey, it was recounted in the first Jovian Chronicles sourcebook. The total human population is around 9 billion; of those, only 4 billion are found on Earth, the rest populating the various colonies. The slow rate of growth of the population is explained by the incessant civil wars that plagued Earth roughly from the late 21st century up to the late 22nd, and the strict birth control procedures applied by the colonies.**

**The human-settled Solar System can be divided in roughly eight regions: Earth, its Orbital colonies, the Moon, Mars, the Belt, Jupiter, Venus and Mercury. Another player, the United Solar Nations, while not a country, could be added to this roster.**

## EARTH

The birthplace of mankind is a planet damaged by centuries of over-population, environmental abuses and civil wars. Only recently has order been restored in the form of the Central Earth Government and Administration (CEGA), a planetary government as ruthless as it is efficient. Earthmen as a whole have an arrogant attitude about them and believe the Earth should lead the solar system as befit its position as the craddle of all humanity.

## ORBITAL COLONIES

The orbital colonies were the salvation of many who fled the Earth during the troubled periods of its recent history. The colonies are huge O'Neil stations parked at the Lagrange points around the planet. Orbitals, as these colonists are refered to, are hard-working, peaceful people who follow the CEGA's lead as a means of protecting their fragile homes.

## THE MOON

The Moon is the CEGA's industrial center. Its inhabitants are living in huge complexes buried beneath the soil, shielded against solar flares and cosmic radiation. Many of the Earth's heavy industries were moved to the Moon to benefit from the abundent solar power and large mineral deposits found there. The Selenites are disciplined, strong people used to carving their living out of the inhospitable surface of Earth's satellite. They are part of the CEGA but only because it provides them with protection and business opportunities.

## MARS

Mars is peculiar in that it is divided into two political entities: the Martian Free Republic and the Martian Federation. The Republic is populated by freedom-minded individuals used to think by themselves and rely only on their close relations. The Federation is a much more oppressive place, as the government and the population believe in strict social discipline to help them prosper. Understandably, clashes between the two are frequent.

## THE BELT

The myriad asteroids which make up the Belt are populated by mobile nomad communities, each a society of its own. Most if not all live in large asteroid stations carved right out of the rock. Belters are independent and distrustful of strangers.

The Belt is also home to pirates, who find a haven in its anarchy. Pirates usually prey on passing merchant ships or nomad communities. Both Jupiter and Mars are aware of the problem and frequently coordinate patrols to cover more ground.

## JUPITER

The Jovian Confederation is home to the thinkers and workers who have fled the troubled Earth of the past centuries. Their enormous space stations, orbiting Jupiter and protected by sturdy screen generators, are a sight to behold. The Confederation was the first to field exo-armors.

Jovians are community-oriented, intelligent and reliable people. Their ancestors, having taken refuge from wars and misery, have made the Jovian society a peaceful one, dedicated to the study of science and the betterment of life. Although they get along well with most of the other settlements, they distrust both the CEGA and Venus. It is also rumored that certain factions within the Agora (the Jovian government) are starting to get ambitious.

## VENUS

Venus was terraformed by a consortium of major corporations to create a safe haven for their organizations. The process was surprizingly fast and succesful, and Venus is now an habitable planet — although terraforming won't be finished for a couple of centuries yet. In the meantime, the Venusians live in huge polar arcologies, surrounded by luxury.

The best way to describe Venus' inhabitants would be "aristocratic". They are the descendants of a large group of people who left Earth and came to Venus mainly to protect their fortune and influence.

## MERCURY

Mercury is a rather small settlement, whose main export is high-grade miniature electronic components. Their merchant fleet is also impressive. Mercury's population is a strange mix of people. Some came here attracted to the rich mineral resources of the planet; others came here to escape the elitist Venusian society.

The most notable characteristic of Mercury is that it is the headquarters of the powerful Merchant Guild, a large association of merchant companies which provide most of the transportation throughout the solar system.

## UNITED SOLAR NATIONS

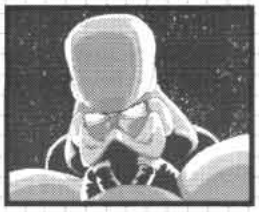
The USN evolved from the old United Nations to provide a neutral meeting ground between the various settlements. In time, it acquired political weight and even founded a private peace-keeping army/law enforcement agency, the Solar Police (SolaPol). The UNS is now a recognised force in the politics and events that shape the history of the solar system.

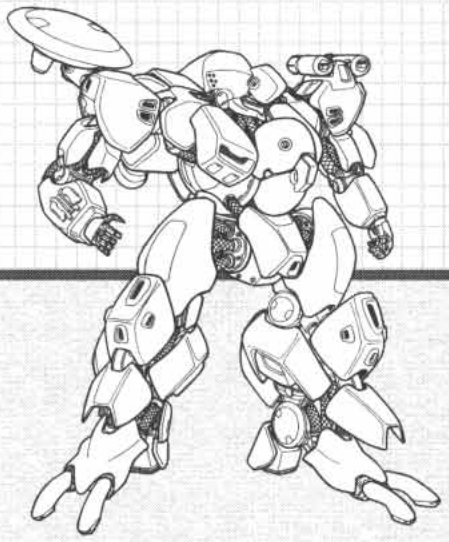


Raymond P Campiglio (Order # 3310148)

## EAL-04 PATHFINDER

The Pathfinder is one of the oldest exo-armor in the Jovian military arsenal. It is the standard light EA of the JAF and is used mostly for patrol, although its heavy armor and speed make it a useful member of a combat team. Most newcomers to the ranks are assigned a Pathfinder as the operating interface and onboard computer are very user-friendly.

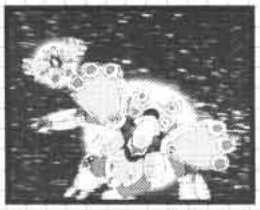


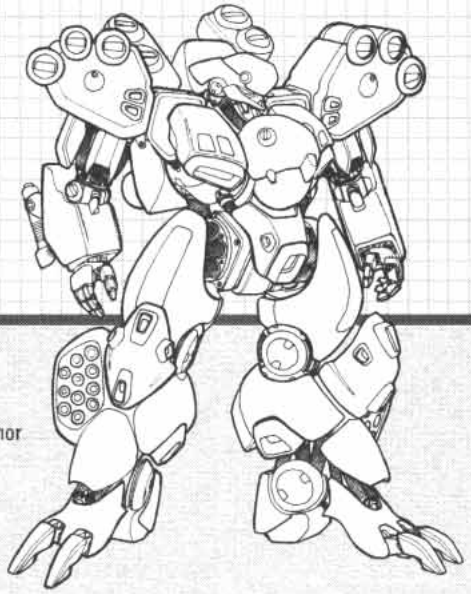


**Name:** Pathfinder
**Production code:** EAL-04
**Manufacturer:** Jovian Armor Works
**Use:** general purpose scout exo-armor
**Control system:** linear frame
**Height:** 15.4 m
**Weight:** 27.4 Tons
**Power plant:** 1550 kW
**Main thrusters:** 12
**Apogee motors:** 17
**Armament:** 1 Jovian Optics 652A particle cannon, 2 MMJ-4 missiles, 2 PL3 plasma lances
**Equipment:** survival pod, MR-65 EWAC system, booster unit (opt.)

## EAH-01 VINDICATOR

The Vindicator is currently the most powerful mass-produced exo-armor in the solar system. Because of its high cost, it is usually assigned to proven pilots or squadron commander only. The massive armament and armor gives the Vindicator a tremendous advantage in combat.





**Name:** Vindicator
**Production code:** EAH-01
**Manufacturer:** Jovian Armor Works
**Use:** general purpose heavy trooper exo-armor
**Control system:** linear frame
**Height:** 17.1 m
**Weight:** 65.4 tons
**Powerplant:** 1670 kW
**Main thrusters:** 12
**Apogee motors:** 29
**Armament:** 1 JAW-15 mass-driver w/ Jovian Optics 54L laser cannon, 2 Jovian Optics AM-1 anti-missile system, 10 HMJ-6 missiles, 18 LMJ-1 missiles, 4 PL3B plasma lances
**Equipment:** escape pod, extra verniers

# JOVIAN CHRONICLES CHARACTERS

**by Marc A. Vezina**

### ADRIAN ALLEN

Exo-Armor pilot, JAF

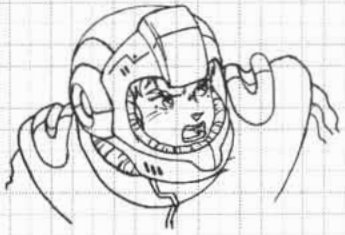
Adrian does not fit into the typical exo-armor pilot description. He would often prefer to be somewhere writing poetry or discussing philosophy rather than fly his Pathfinder (nicknamed "Socrates"). This does make him stand out in the adventurous club of the JAF, but he doesn't mind. He is only there to help protect his people. While very professional, Adrian sometimes panics in combat because of his inexperience and his inability to deal with a non-linear situation. He is currently single, although he is attracted to Roxy Fujima. Now, if he could get to actually ask her out...



Raymond P Campiglio (Order # 33181643)

## MADELAINE KOUDRIOPOULOS

Exo-Armor pilot, JAF



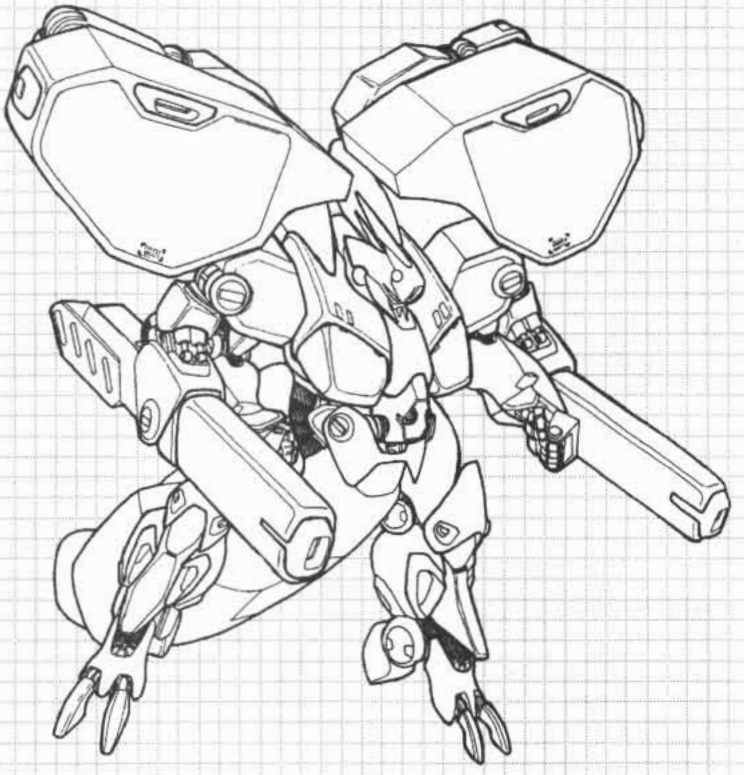
Madelaine is the only daughter of Konrad Koudriopoulos, Khannan Base's commander. Because of this, she literally had to fight both the pilots, who accused her of favoritism, and her father, who made every effort to make her step down. Her strong mind and tenacious nature didn't help, and she was soon paired with another outcast, Adrian Allen. Adrian is like the big brother she never had and she interferes a lot in his personal life, much to his despair. Despite her strong personality, she is shy when it comes to dating, and she has yet to find a boyfriend.

## EAX-C1 PROMETHEUS

The Prometheus was originaly intended to be the prototype of a new generation of exo-armors which would be more efficient, better armed and faster than their predecessors. As construction progressed, however, several experimental systems were added to the basic frame of the machine, making it a one-of-a-kind wonder, too costly to be reproduced.

To make maximum use of the weapons and flight system, the cockpit uses a high-speed vectoring/self-correcting computer. With the recent addition of the highly experimental CAT control apparatus, the Prometheus essentially allows the pilot to perform most flight/fight operations without relying on slow manual controls, thus greatly improving the response time so critical in modern space combat. Use of the new G-Cockpit help negates the violent inertial stress associated with the high maneuvering capacity of the EAX-C1.

The Prometheus is unique in its ability to use a large "suit" of extra armor called the "Storm Attacker" configuration. Missile launchers are mounted on the main body in large armored housings, while a pair of powerful (if short-ranged) beam cannons provide the main punch. Large claw-arms extend out of the missile units in case of hand-to-hand combat, and a particle scattering gun is mounted in the main body.



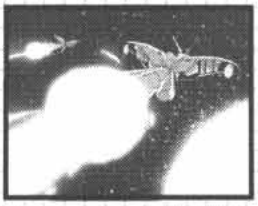
**Name:** Prometheus
**Production code:** EAX-C1
**Manufacturer:** Jovian Skunk Works
**Use:** experimental heavy exo-armor
**Control system:** linear frame w/CAT
**Height:** 16.2 m (20.8 m w/SA)
**Weight:** 69.4 tons (87.3 tons w/SA)
**Powerplant:** 3506 kW (8652 kW w/SA generator)
**Main thrusters:** 14 (+9 w/SA)
**Apogee motors:** 25 (+12 w/SA)
**Armament:** 2 plasma interface devices, 2 plasma lances, 1 beam cannon/Storm Attacker add: 2 heavy beam cannons, 80 JSS-1 missiles, 1 particle scattering gun, 2 crusher claws
**Equipment:** CAT system, escape pod.

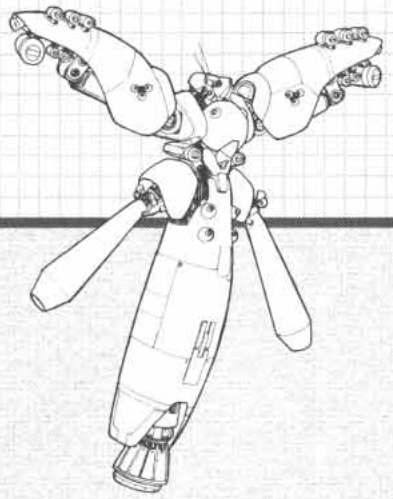


Raymond P. Campiglia (Order # 3316148)

## CEA-01 SYREEN

The Syreen was hastily designed by the CEGA to be a stopgap measure to the recent colonial advances in exo-armor technology. Using an old OTV (Orbital Transfer Vehicule) model, the CEGA technicians built a legless and crude craft capable of defending itself in hand-to-hand combat as well as carrying anti-ship missiles. The vehicle was dubbed Syreen for its appearance and ability to lure opponents into a well-prepared trap using its ECM pod. The pod was too costly to use on all EA, so it was later decided that only the officer variant would carry it on the production model.

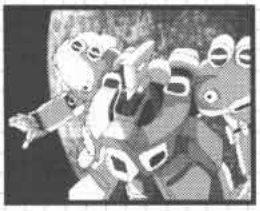


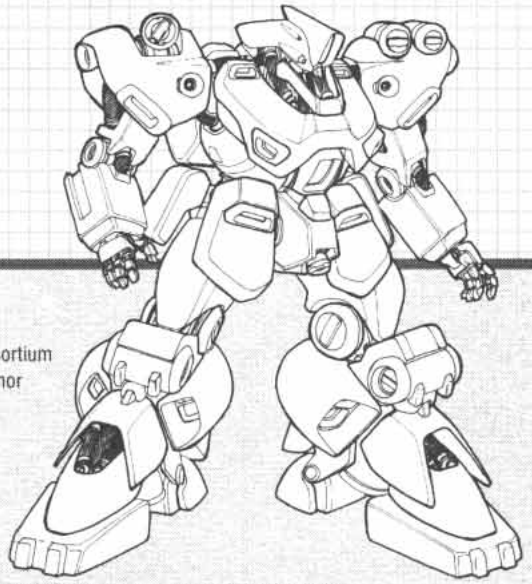


**Name:** Syreen
**Production code:** CEA-01
**Manufacturer:** Lunar Aerospace Consortium
**Use:** general purpose space trooper exo-armor
**Control system:** linear frame
**Height:** 14.2 m
**Weight:** 38.2 Tons
**Power plant:** 1203 kW
**Main thrusters:** 3
**Apogee motors:** 12
**Armament:** 2 heavy missiles, 6 medium missiles, 4 light missiles, 2 pincers, 1 Automated Laser System.
**Equipment:** escape pod, SOBU-1 booster unit.

## CEA-05 WYVERN

As the Retaliator was gradually introduced in the JAF's front line units, the CEGA's Council decided they needed a new, more modern exo-armor design to face it. Although efficient, the most recent updates of the Syreen were hopelessly outclassed, so the research was oriented in a new direction. Although the Wyvern is a recent design, several variations are already into production in an effort to modernize the Armed Force as fast as possible.





**Name:** Wyvern
**Production code:** CEA-05
**Manufacturer:** Lunar Aerospace Consortium
**Use:** general purpose trooper exo-armor
**Control system:** linear frame
**Height:** 16.8
**Weight:** 47.5 tons
**Power plant:** 1712 kW
**Main thrusters:** 10
**Apogee motors:** 23
**Armament:** 1 LACW-8, 1 Zapper Mk 2 AM system, 2 LACW-1M massdrivers, 2 3MC-2 missile canisters, 2 3M-3 missiles
**Equipment:** escape pod

## ROXY FUJIMA

Freelance reporter

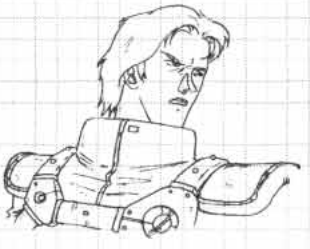
Not much is known about Roxy. She prefers not to talk about her past, but her manners suggest she was raised on Mars. She is of mixed caucasian and asian blood and has a secretive personality, and even her friends sometimes find it hard to tell what's on her mind. She currently works as a freelance reporter, travelling from cylinder to cylinder in search of her next story. Her beauty has attracted many men over the years, but she has always turned them down. However, a young pilot whom she met while reporting on a strange affair may yet soften her attitude.



Raymond P Campiglio (Order # 33181648)

## RANHO GARAND

Lieutnant, CEGA Space Forces



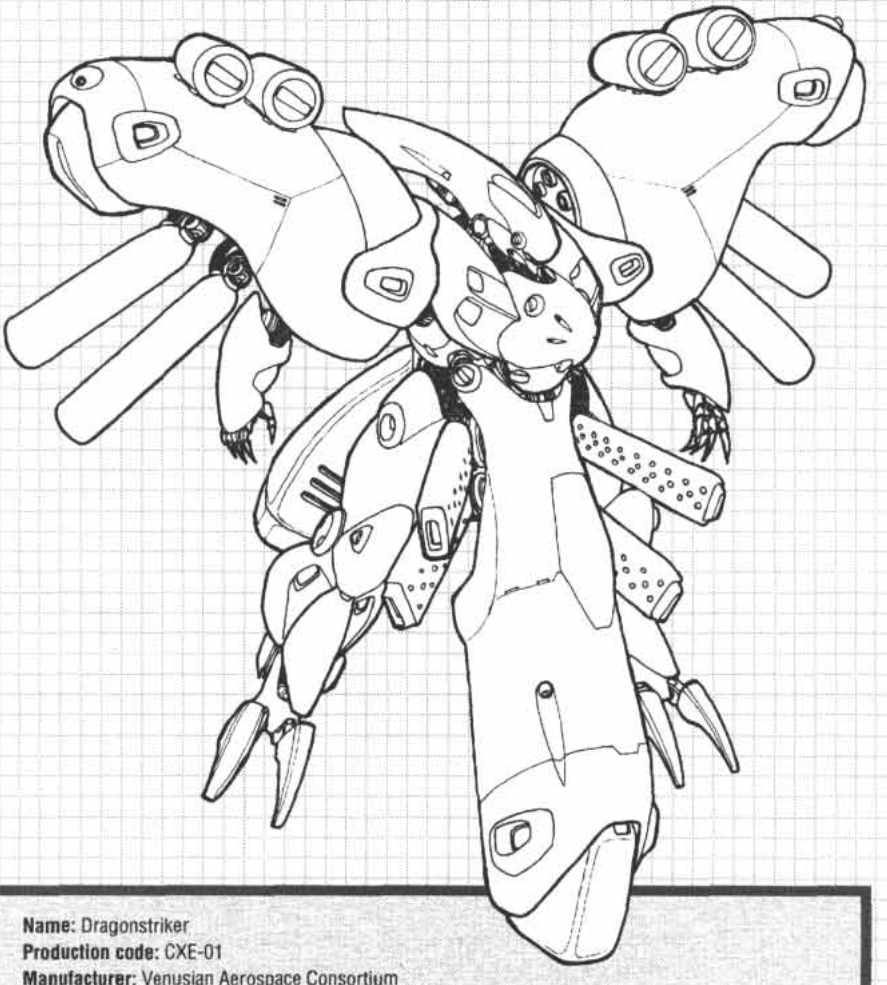
A war orphan, Ranho Garand was raised by the state and truly believes in the CEGA's claim to rule the solar system. The images of devastation he witnessed in his youth forged a deep respect for the civilian population who always has had to endure the consequences of conflicts. Vowing to protect the innocent, he later entered the CEGA Officer Academy to graduate at the top of his class. His spotless service record enabled him to quickly rise in the ranks of the CEGA's armed forces, which gave him access to the newest combat machines and allowed him to travel extensively. He has a secretive personality and is a man of honor, who will be loyal and faithful once you've acquired his trust.

## CXE-01 DRAGONSTRIKER

As the work of Doctor Agram Peyarje progressed, it became clear that his "cyberlinkage" could be used to control a machine with incredible efficiency. The Council thus deemed Dr. Peyarje conscripted and put him to work on a practical version of his equipment which would be used on the highly secret Dragonstriker Program.

The result of this program, the Dragonstriker, is a one-of-a-kind experimental model designed for maximum-performance, long-range heavy assault and combat. Fast, thickly armored and armed like a cruiser, it does deserve its name. Beside being one of the most powerful space-fighting machine ever built, the Dragonstriker is also the first to be equipped with the CAT system, which boost the performance of the pilot by reducing the control interface response time.

The whole project is shrouded in the greatest secrecy, although some rumors have started to filter out. Only one prototype was built because of the enormous cost of the design.



**Name:** Dragonstriker
**Production code:** CXE-01
**Manufacturer:** Venusian Aerospace Consortium
**Use:** experimental heavy assault exo-armor
**Control system:** linear frame w/CAT
**Height:** 24.1 m
**Weight:** 95.6 tons
**Powerplant:** 12752 kW
**Main thrusters:** 13
**Apogee motors:** 20
**Armament:** 4 heavy beam cannons, 6 30 mm vulcan guns, 2 medium laser cannons, 4 Mk 35 Fusion missiles, 2 anti-missile turrets, 2 claw-tipped hands.
**Equipment:** CAT system, escape pod, detachable booster.



Raymond P Campiglia (Order : 33181643)

# WHAT'S HEAVY GEAR?

By Marc A. Vezina

You saw the ads in Mecha Press, or you heard about it on the Internet. What is **Heavy Gear**? It is the newest mecha gaming universe to hit the market. It is also the first entirely home-designed game by Dream Pod 9, the team that brought you Jovian Chronicles and the magazine you are presently holding in your hands.

**Heavy Gear** is the culmination of nearly a year of collective effort. Habitual readers of Mecha Press have read the short **Heavy Gear** introductory feature in issue #12, but the story runs much deeper than that. Let's examine the generation process step by step.

The basic Silhouette game concepts were laid down during a discussion back in early September 1993. The team was just back from GenCon, and ideas abounded amongst the many people present. This was the start of the **Heavy Gear** saga.

During the months that followed, the system evolved through many variations, although the base principles stayed the same. Drafts were submitted to friends, and later, to playtesting groups in the Montreal area. All came back with positive reviews, so we knew we were doing something right.

In the meantime, the universe behind the game was also evolving. We wanted something that would make us stand apart from the rest, when Jean, Martin and Stephane came up with a concept: a timeline that would be a story. Not only would the game advance chronologically, but there would be a large-scale story behind it all. Clues and hints would be scattered through the books to create a gigantic and epic saga that the gamers could enjoy following as well as playing.

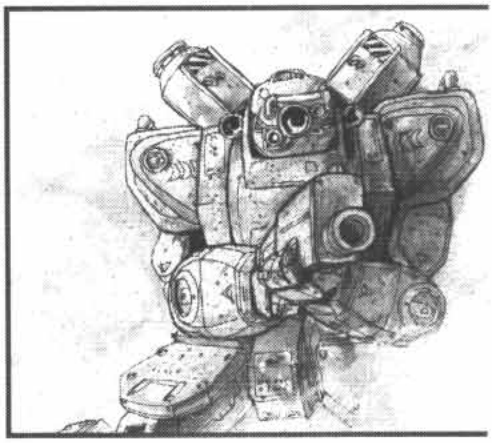
From the loose concepts assembled over dinners and lunches emerged a clearer picture of where the game was headed. Everybody had agreed that hard, gritty SF would be the norm. Except for faster-than-light travel, the science used in the game would conform to the laws of nature. Space travel would still be expensive and dangerous, similar to the concepts seen in movies like **2001** or **Alien**.

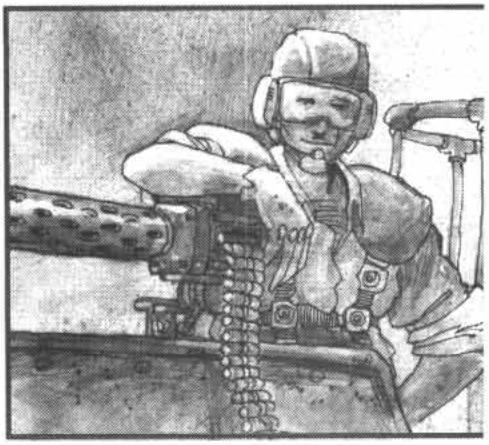
The game setting was also placed far away in the future. There were several reasons for this. One, this would cover any close-future change in history; who cares about the year 1998 when your character is living in 6132? Second, we all agreed that although many SF stories made colonisation seem like a simple procedure, the opposite would probably be true. We thus needed time to establish our human planets.

Everybody on the team wanted to keep technology at a manageable level. We did put in some highly advanced devices, but we freely mixed the technological levels to create a believable atmosphere. Why use a tractor that keeps breaking down if you can use a strong beast that will do the same work, better? So the overall tech was very patchy, and we liked that. The gears are a perfect example of this: a super-advanced computer in an old-tech body with bits and bolts everywhere.

By Spring of 1994, the elements fell into place. A new aspect was added to the **Heavy Gear** universe when one of our writers developed a card-based combat game. The mechanics were quickly adapted to **HG** to create a second, high-paced game of one-on-one combat.

This is where **Heavy Gear** is now. A whole line of merchandize and supplements has been planned for this universe. And the story has already started... Remember, time is running out!





Raymond P Campiglia (Order 33161648)

# HEAVY GEAR WORLD OVERVIEW

By Marc A. Vezina

**The story of Heavy Gear takes place on a far away planet, settled by Mankind centuries ago and left to fend for itself. The people there have evolved a distinct society, adapting to the characteristics of their new home planet. The centers of government are the leagues, associations of city-states which rule the countryside. Only the gigantic equatorial desert known as the Badlands escapes their influence.**

## CONFEDERATED NORTHERN CITY-STATES

The Confederated Northern City-States are a loose association of the three main leagues located in the Northern Hemisphere. The CNCS also includes a few independent city-states which were either unaffiliated with the leagues or unwilling to do so.

The league-members cooperate on many plans, including trade and technological development. A good example of this are the military vehicles which are often sold to allied leagues. Nonetheless, under the apparent unity of the Confederation lies deep mistrust that sometimes leads to squabbles and skirmishes, especially along borders and unaffiliated territories in the Badlands.

## NORTHERN LIGHTS CONFEDERACY

The Northern Lights Confederacy is the oldest and biggest of the three leagues that form the CNCS. It was Norlight diplomats that first proposed the CNCS as a deterrent against possible aggression by the newly formed Southern leagues.

## UNITED MERCANTILE FEDERATION

The Federation is the second member-league of the CNCS. It is a highly industrialized league whose factories produce nearly half of the manufactured products sold in the Northern Hemisphere.

## WEST FRONTIER PROTECTORATE

The last member-league of the CNCS is the Western Frontier Protectorate, which controls a triangle-shaped zone on the West front. This zone borders on the Badlands, making the Protectorate an inhospitable place to live. The Protectorate's society is centered around its army.

## ALLIED SOUTHERN TERRITORIES

The CNCS' counterpart in the Southern Hemisphere is not based on mutual trust. It is an alliance enforced by military might and half-voiced and implied threats in the antechambers of the ambassadors' mansions.

The AST league-members send representatives to a summit each year to discuss external policies and accuse each other of using the Alliance to further their own agendas. The only real positive achievement of the summit is the Medical Court to arbitrate the use of medicine, and the adoption eight years ago of a somewhat unified force with new uniforms and similar equipment. Both could serve as a focus point for the disparate population of the leagues composing the alliance.

## SOUTHERN REPUBLIC

Although the Southern Republic is a democracy where the standard of life is quite high, it is by no means a peaceful utopia. Republican forces were responsible for the theft of the Hunter heavy gear from the United Mercantile Federation and spearheaded its subsequent use against civilian and military objectives in the Southern Hemisphere.

## HUMANIST ALLIANCE

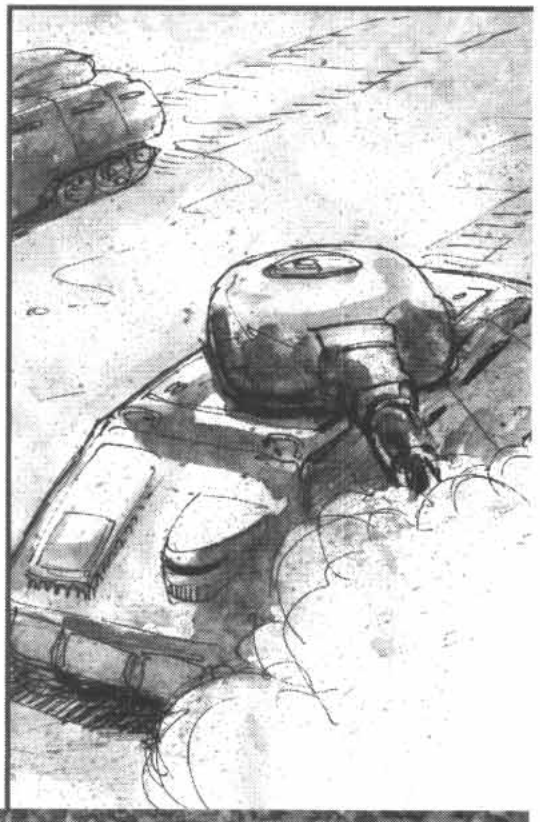
The Humanist Alliance is a rarity: a human society led by a council of scientists who are devoted to the peaceful development of their community. The Alliance is perhaps the most stable league on Terra Nova. This does not mean, however, that the Alliance is defenseless — in fact, it is quite the opposite.

## MEKONG DOMINION

The Dominion is a small merchant/agricultural league which has grown steadily stronger through its trade relations with the other leagues of the Southern Hemisphere. The majority of its people are descendants of settlers from the Asian and African sectors on Earth. The league is a major producer of rice and an aquatic variety of the johar grass called jhong.

## EASTERN SUN EMIRATES

The Eastern Sun Emirates is a mining/industrially oriented league located on the edge of the Badlands. Its territory is rich with rare minerals and the inhabitants skilled in the art of metal-working.



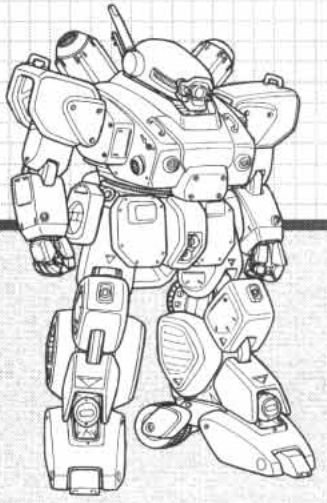


Raymond P. Campiglia (Order: 3318648)

## HACS-01MG-MP HUNTER

The Hunter heavy gear has the distinction of being the first exclusively military walker machine on Terra Nova. As such, it was a sturdy, simple machine which enjoyed an enormous popularity in its prime. Hunters were produced by the thousands and found their way into the military forces of practically all nations of the North. The design, slightly modified and renamed "Jager", is also found in the armies of the South!

Although the Hunter is a fine machine, it has several shortcomings due to its old age: it is not very fast and is somewhat bulky. However, it is simple and rugged, which is one of the main reasons it is still produced and used today.

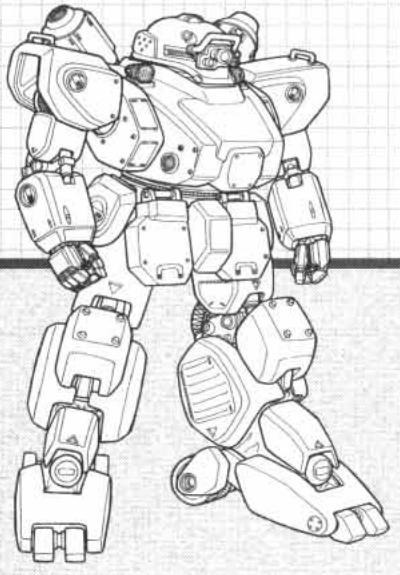


**Code name:** Hunter
**Production code:** HACS-01MG-MP
**Manufacturer:** Northco
**Use:** soldier use heavy gear
**Height:** 4.3 meters
**Full combat weight:** 6627 kg
**Armor material:** durasheet w/alloy
**Average armor thickness:** 45 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 41 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 74.2 km/h
**Power plant:** S-V950A V-Engine
**Horse power:** 450 Hp
**Usual armament:** 1 machinecannon, 3 grenades, 1 3-shot mortar, 1 vibroknife

## HACS-02MG-MPS JAGUAR

The Jaguar was intended to be the Hunter's successor in the armies of the Confederation. It is faster, sports better armor and can carry heavier weaponery, all at the cost of some endurance. It was also the unit that introduced the use of the VR helmet, dispensing with the bulky screens and HUD of the early Hunter models.

Jaguars are fewer in number than Hunters because of their higher cost, and are thus more likely to be found in elite units such as the infamous "Cat's Paws".



**Code name:** Jaguar
**Production code:** HACS-02MG-MPS
**Manufacturer:** Northco
**Use:** soldier use heavy gear
**Height:** 4.9 meters
**Full combat weight:** 7123 kg
**Armor material:** durasheet w/alloy and ceramic
**Average armor thickness:** 50 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 52.1 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 81 km/h
**Power plant:** S-V1110 V-Engine
**Horse power:** 620 Hp
**Usual armament:** 1 machinecannon, 6 grenades, 1 3-shot mortar, 1 vibroknife

# HEAVY GEAR DICTIONARY

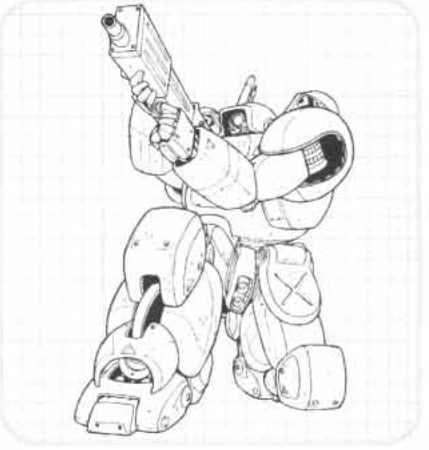
**By Marc A. Vezina**

### ARMOPLAST

An advanced polymer material made of a complex molecule. It is used as matrix in many composites, including armor plates. It is also used in the contruction of light, disposable weapons. Armoplast is available in a variety of grades which are numbered for reference.

### DURASHEET

A composite made of hardened Flexite alloy fibers in an Armoplast II matrix. Durasheet is very thin and flexible, while also very resilient. It is used for reinforced clothing and as one of the many layers of modern armor plating.



### HEAVY GEAR

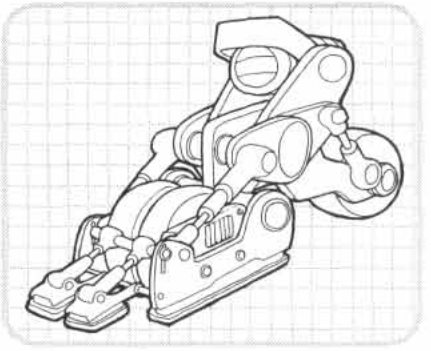
A one-man infantry fighting vehicle, designed to protect a soldier and enable him to carry heavy weaponry over vast distances. Most gears stand around 4 meters tall and support as much armor as a twenty-first century tank ten times their size.

### NNET

The abbreviation for Neural Network, the NNet is the "brain" of the heavy gear. It is the super-fast computer that translates the control inputs from the pilot to complex body motions.



Raymond P Campiglio (Order # 33161643)

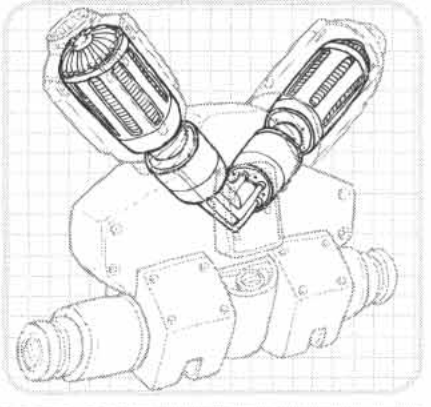


## SMS

The abbreviation for Secondary Movement System, the SMS is most often a set of wheels or treads placed underneath the feet or hull of the gear to allow extra speed. Some gears have specialised systems for water and other environments.

## TANNHAUSER GATE/DRIVE

Tannhauser Gates are faults in the space-time continuum that allow the formation, by a Gate Drive, of artificial wormholes to cover huge distances in no time. There are named after some 20th century scientific FTL theories (or perhaps popular fiction?).



## V-ENGINE

An advanced internal combustion engine that was invented in the late twentieth century by a team at the University of Colorado. V-engines are so named after their shapes, which allows two drive shafts. V-engines can burn almost any fuel and are very efficient for their diminutive size.

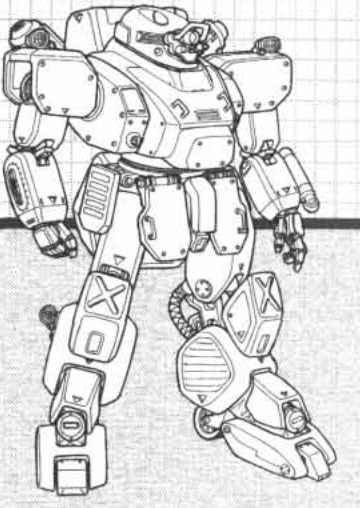
## VISUP

Short for VIsual SUb-Processor, the VISUP is the specialised computer that computes the sensors' information before sending it to both the NNet and the pilot.

## HACS-01LG-SCT CHEETAH

Yet another machine evolved from the Hunter design, the Cheetah was born out of the need for a rapid scout/strike unit at a reasonable cost. The Cheetah was Shaian's first entry in the military market; Shaian, an actuator/gear frame company, made sure the vehicle got the best actuators possible, resulting in a fast, supple machine.

The Cheetah is lightly armored but relies on its speed and superb maneuverability to avoid being hit. It can carry several Pack Guns (light, disposable automatic cannons) on weapon mounts along its waist.

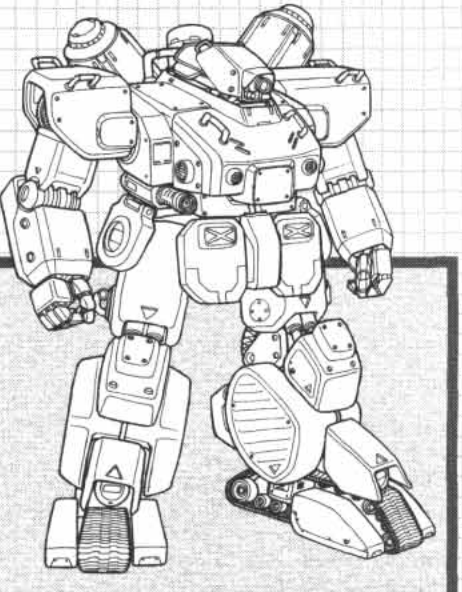


**Code name:** Cheetah
**Production code:** HACS-01LG-SCT
**Manufacturer:** Shaian Mechanics
**Use:** scout/recon heavy gear
**Height:** 4.3 meters
**Full combat weight:** 5230 kg
**Armor material:** durasheet w/alloy
**Average armor thickness:** 20 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 65 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 91.6 km/h
**Power plant:** S-V820S V-Engine
**Horse power:** 425 Hp
**Usual armament:** up to 4 Pack Guns, grenades, vibroknife

## HACS-02HG-MPS GRIZZLY

The Grizzly is what could be called a "heavy" heavy gear. It towers over other designs and is equaled only by the Southern Alliance's Spitting Cobra. Grizzlys are usually used to tow field artillery pieces, a job at which they excel because of the high torque ratio of their main drive. Unfortunately, this results in a slow ground speed.

The Grizzly is also very efficient in assault squads because of its heavy armor. A interesting characteristic is the single minigun bolted under the right arm, on the side of the body just above the waist. Although intended for anti-personnel purposes, the gun can damage armored targets if fired long enough.



**Code name:** Grizzly
**Production code:** HACS-02HG-MPS
**Manufacturer:** Northco/Shaian Mechanics
**Use:** soldier use "heavy type" heavy gear
**Height:** 5.0 meters
**Full combat weight:** 9210 kg
**Armor material:** durasheet w/alloy and ceramic
**Average armor thickness:** 70 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 40 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 65 km/h
**Power plant:** S-V2200Z V-Engine
**Horse power:** 956 Hp
**Usual armament:** 1 bazooka, 1 machinecannon, 1 minigun, 1 3-shot mortar, 6 grenades, 1 Pack Gun, 1 vibroknife



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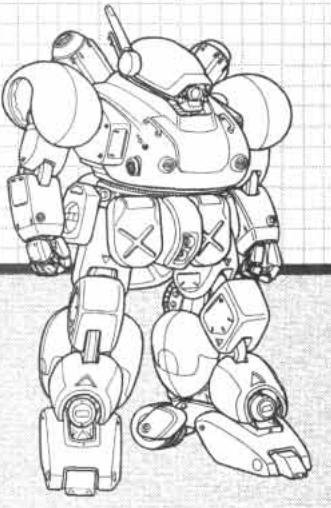
## OACS-01A/SU JAGER

The Jager is the southern version of the successful Hunter heavy gear design. Southern Republic commandos stole the design a century ago and brought it back to the Republic which quickly used it to force the other southern leagues into a military alliance.

Externally, the Jager looks quite different from its northern cousin: it has rounded shoulders and a more refined appearance. The internal systems, however, are practically the same as the ones found on the Hunter.

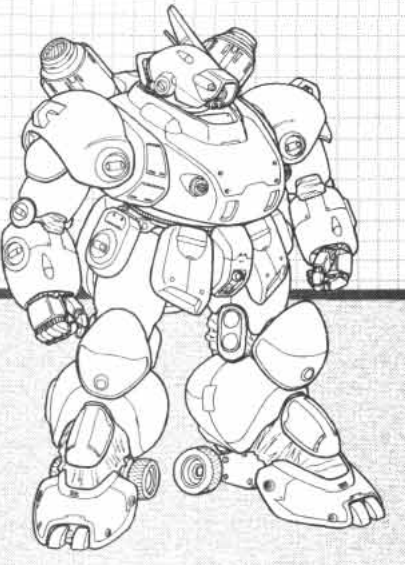


**Code name:** Jager
**Production code:** OACS-01A/SU
**Manufacturer:** Territorial Arms
**Use:** soldier use heavy gear
**Height:** 4.3 meters
**Full combat weight:** 6627 kg
**Armor material:** durasheet w/alloy
**Average armor thickness:** 45 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 41.1 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 74.1 km/h
**Power plant:** WV-950A V-Engine
**Horse power:** 450 Hp
**Usual armament:** 1 machinecannon, 3 grenades, 1 3-shot mortar, 1 vibroknife

## OACS-05M/SU BLACK MAMBA

The Black Mamba is a recent southern design whic took the northern armies by surprise. The Mamba is a totally new machine, a rugged medium gear designed to replace the earlier "M"-class Basilisk heavy gear as the advanced model of the Southern Alliance.

The Mamba can be compared favorably with the North's Jaguar, although they are very different in concept. The Mamba uses a carbon composite in its internal frame to reduce the quantity of metal needed in its construction. It also sports rounded composite armor to better deflect incoming rounds.



**Code name:** Black Mamba
**Production code:** OACS-05M/SU
**Manufacturer:** Territorial Arms
**Use:** soldier use heavy gear
**Height:** 4.8 meters
**Full combat weight:** 5230 kg
**Armor material:** armoplast w/composite
**Average armor thickness:** 56 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 55.4 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 84 km/h
**Power plant:** WV-930TC V-Engine
**Horse power:** 630 Hp
**Usual armament:** 1 machinecannon, 3 grenades, 2 3-shot mortars, 1 vibromachete

# HEAVY GEAR DEVELOPMENT

**By Marc A. Vezina**

The first interplanetary colonists were faced with a difficult problem. Their new home planet was similar to Earth, yet was also very different. For one, it was more rugged and mountainous and featured uncertain conditions. The best solution was to use mostly the walker type vehicle which was commonly used in construction and other specialized tasks.

Because the colonial corporations were unwilling to spend large sums of money to transport important quantities of cargo over to Terra Nova, the mission specialists had to turn toward modular and highly adaptable components which could serve in a variety of ways and yet be easy to maintain using local resources and material. The first of this new line of equipment was the Hardhat, a rugged cockpit/main body system to which could be attached a variety of tool limbs. The Hardhat was self-contained: it carried its own walk-control computer and sensor attachment. Additional sensor and computer modules came with the limbs.

The first years of colonization saw the arrival of nearly 1200 Hardhats on Terra Nova. They were adapted to a huge number of function, and even discarded units were used as spare parts to build conventional vehicles. The Hardhat served as base for the evolution of the walker on many of the colonial planets.

By 5800, walkers were used extensively on Terra Nova. When the colonial corporations were forced to retire because of the economic crisis on Earth, many settlers armed their machines in the hope of breaking through the spaceports' defensive lines. The period saw the first use of the walker as a viable tool of war.

As the years passed and the city-states were founded one by one, new armies



Raymond P. Campiglia (Order # 3318648)

arose to protect them. These armies included walker vehicles in various roles, including infantry support, but they were still essentially modified civilian equipment, not particularly suited for warfare. In 5948, the United Mercantile Federation's engineers started work on a true military walking infantry vehicle, or BOT (Bipedal One-man Tank). The result of this program was the HACS-01MG-MP Hunter, a rugged, boxy machine that could be easily produced and fielded. Thousands of Hunters left the assembly line in the next fifty years, many of them sold to the UMF's allies.

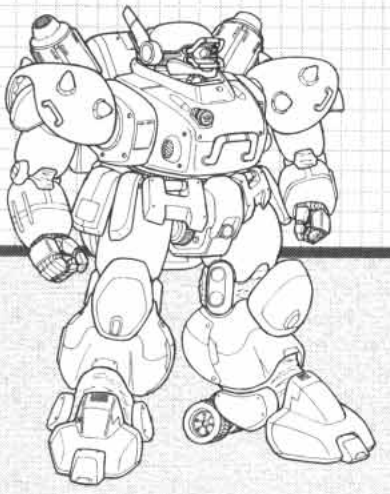
Worried by this new technological development, the Southern Republic tried to acquire a few Hunters by several means — some legal, others definitely not — but to no avail. It was not before 5951 that Republican commandos were able to steal one Hunter from an advanced Protectorate force in the Badlands. A mere six months later, the Republic was using its own version of the Hunter (named OACS-01A-SU Jager) to force its neighboring Southern states into a coalition led by the Republic.

It took a whole century for new gear designs to appear. During that time, the faithful Hunter was modified for a huge number of operational roles and served in virtually all fronts during the many skirmishes between the North, the South and the independent Badlands city-states.

## OACS-01L/SC IGUANA

Although the Iguana looks somewhat like its brethren of the "M" class, it is in fact very different both in mission capability and construction. The Iguana is not built around the usual composite chassis but a metallic alloy one. Its armor also incorporate alloy with the armoplast material.

The Iguana was conceived to replace the modified, stripped-down Basilisks that were used for scouting purposes before. The machine is small, with the pilot cramped into a tiny cockpit which occupies a good part of the main body. Tiny and fast, the Iguana is perfectly suited to recon and rapid strike missions where discretion is the norm.

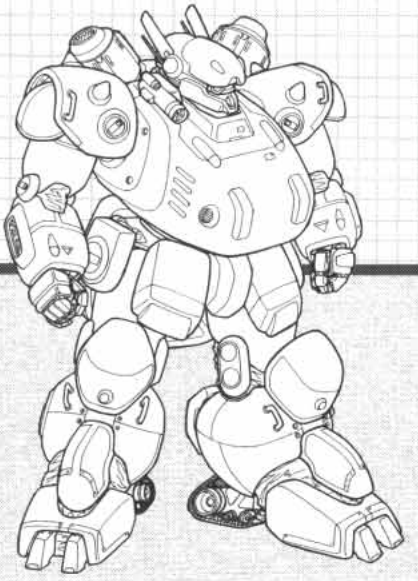


**Code name:** Iguana
**Production code:** OACS-01L/SC
**Manufacturer:** Territorial Arms
**Use:** scout/recon heavy gear
**Height:** 4.2 meters
**Full combat weight:** 5100 kg
**Armor material:** armoplast w/alloy
**Average armor thickness:** 40 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 52 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 84.2 km/h
**Power plant:** WV-750TC/B V-Engine
**Horse power:** 360 Hp
**Usual armament:** 1 light machinecannon, 1 vibroknife

## OACS-01H/SU SPITTING COBRA

The Spitting Cobra is one of the South's heavier gear models. It follows the usual design philosophy of the Southern engineers: rounded composite armor and minimal metallic alloy use. Still, the vehicle is heavy so its secondary movement system is a half-track model, sturdier than the usual wheels.

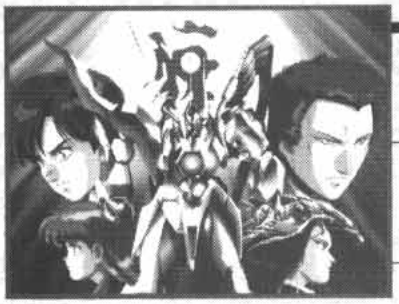
The main function of the Spitting Cobra is to field heavy support weaponry such as mortars and light howitzers. For close defense the Cobra is equipped with a shoulder-mounted high-speed gatling cannon, which, although small and short-ranged, provides an excellent deterrent to any attacker.



**Code name:** Spitting Cobra
**Production code:** OACS-01H/SU
**Manufacturer:** Territorial Arms
**Use:** soldier use "heavy type" heavy gear
**Height:** 5.0 meters
**Full combat weight:** 8990 kg
**Armor material:** armoplast w/alloy and ceramic
**Average armor thickness:** 90 mm
**Maximum running speed:** 35 km/h
**Maximum rolling speed:** 62.8 km/h
**Power plant:** WV-1500TC/A V-Engine
**Horse power:** 940 Hp
**Usual armament:** 1 bazooka, 1 machinecannon, 1 light gatling cannon, 6 grenades, 1 6-shot mortar, 1 vibromachete



Raymond P Campiglia (Order - 3318648)



# HADES PROJECT: ZEORYMER

**By Martin Ouellette**

The original name of this animation is **Meiou Project: Zeorymer**. Meiou is the Japanese equivalent of the mythological Hades, which was the Greek word for the Underworld... or Hell. Before 1988, there had been nothing like **Zeorymer**. There had been lots of different "giant robots" shows before.

There were basically two genres. The first was the "Hero Robot" type show. A young boy, usually an athlete or a racing pilot, jumped into a giant robot built by his father (or uncle, teacher, etc.) and battled other giant robots — or monsters — sent by the bad aliens (or the criminal organization) to conquer the Earth, usually starting with Japan. There were some variations on the theme where the young boy was replaced by a team of teenagers piloting several vehicles which formed a giant robot.

The second genre came to be with **Mobile Suit Gundam**, in which the young pilot is both inexperienced and scared, thrown into events he has no control over. These shows emphasized the characters rather than the machines and presented war as a gruesome, horrible thing. The genre also replaced the aliens/evil criminals of old by detailed political entities, relegating the former to the attic. The giant robots were not heroes anymore, but mere war machines, useless without a human pilot.

You thus had the choice between the awful cliché or the highly realistic high tech warfare story. Then **Zeorymer** arrived. Taken from an original series by Morio Chimi, this four-part OVA produced by Artmic and directed by Toshihiro Hirano (**Macross: the Movie**, **Iczer One**, **Dangaio**)reunited the two genres in a brilliant mix. It had the "evil organization bent on conquering the world" plot device and the humongous giant robots, but also "the scared young boy", "war is hell" and the "hyper mechanism" elements. Blended with unexpected plot twists and Michitaka Kikuchi's (**Good Morning Althea**, **Borgman**) character designs, all this made for a highly potent mixture.

**Hades Project: Zeorymer** recounts the ordeal of 15-year old Masato, the unwilling pilot of the powerful Zeorymer of the Heaven, the once-leader of the Hakkeshu. The Hakkeshu was a team of eight giant robots built by the Hau Dragon conglomerate to concretize their plans of world domination: the Hades Project. Stolen 15 years ago along with the frozen embryo of its genetically engineered pilot, the Zeorymer was turned over to the Japanese government by its inventor, Masaki Kihara.

As Masato reluctantly battles the remaining seven Hakkeshu pilots and their robots, it soon becomes evident that he is not only genetically engineered, he is also a clone of Zeorymer's creator, Kihara. Kihara's plan is simple: he knew he would die while stealing Zeorymer so he ingrained his personality matrix in two of the pilot zygotes: Masato and the Hau Dragon leader Yuratei. Whatever side won, he, Masaki Kihara, would rule the world! Luckily for the world, Masato has Miku, the Zeorymer copilot, to save him from Kihara's madness while Yuratei's gentle heart made her unable to push the Hades Project to its terrible conclusion.

Although this "new genre" OVA did not make a lot of noise, it is very good. A commercially-subtitled version is available from U.S. Manga Corp. It is worth checking out, if only for the mecha themselves.

Unknowingly raised by surogate parents, 15-year old Masato finds himself the pilot of the most powerful machine in the world: Tengoku no Zeorymer, or Zeorymer of the Heaven. He is the genetically engineered pilot of the robot but also the host of Zeorymer creator Kihara's personality, ingrained in his DNA coding. When Kihara awakens in episode two, the gentle Masato is replaced by a cruel megalomaniac bent on carnage, a personality Masato tries to suppress for the rest of the series. Fortunately for him, his copilot, Miku, is there to help him in his desperate fight. Little does he know that Miku's fate and his own are bound together, for better and especially for worse...



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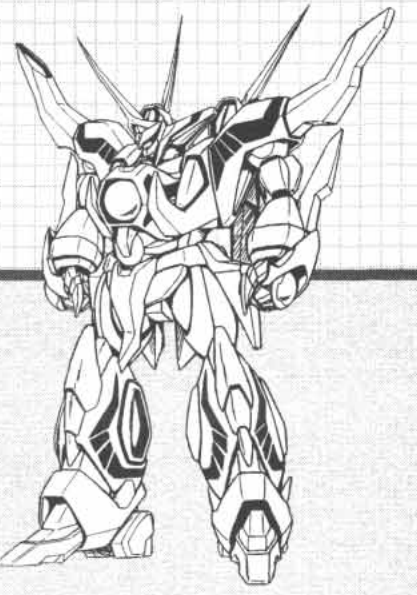
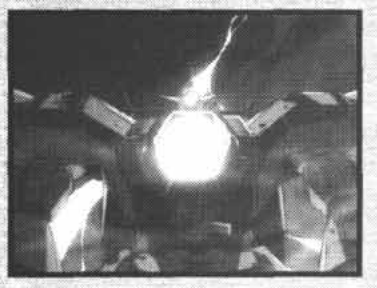
## MIKU HIMURO

The copilot of Zeorymer, Miku is also a creation of Kihara, although she is quite different from the genetically engineered Hakkeshu pilots. Reserved, calm and very gentle, she tries to help Masato come to terms with what and especially who he really is. Although the Kihara side of his personality treats her in an abject way, Miku loves Masato and fights desperately to bring back his true personality. Her delicate looks hide an inhuman strength and speed while her gentleness is only equaled by her fierce determination.

## ZEORYMER OF THE HEAVENS

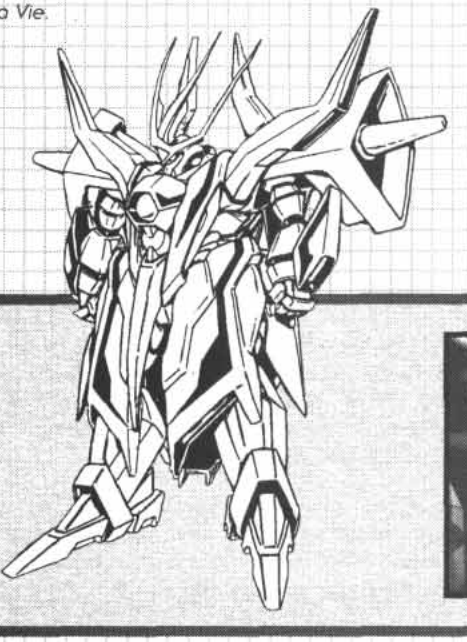
The leader and most powerful of the eight Hakkeshu robots, Zeorymer was stolen from Hau Dragon fifteen years ago by its creator and given to the Japanese government. Zeorymer has two unique characteristics: it needs two pilots — one of them *must* be Miku Himuro — and it is the only Hakkeshu mecha equiped with the Dimensional Transfer System. Zeorymer's most powerful weapon is the Meiou ("Hades") Blast, which destroys everything in its path. Zeorymer's Japanese name is *Tengoku no Zeorymer*.





## ROSE C'EST LA VIE OF THE MOON

Zeorymer's sister robot and the most adaptable of the eight Hakkeshu machines, Rose C'est La Vie was conceived as a space combat mecha and is piloted by Ritsu, the masked warrior of the Hakkeshu. Very fast and maneuverable with its enormous thrusters, Rose C'est La Vie also has a vast selection of weapons. It can use its full energy charge then recharge completely via its three Moonlette satellites, and do this three times in a row. Rose C'est La Vie's most powerful weapon is the Kaiser Blast. The mecha's Japanese name is *Tsuki no Rose C'est La Vie*.



Raymond P Campiglio (Order : 33181643)

# DETONATOR ORGUN

**By Martin Ouellette**

"Ore ga!.. Orgun! I'm Orgun!" This phrase is the perfect introduction to this three-part OVA series, one of the best of the 90s (so far). It recounts the adventures of Tomoru Shindo, a 24th century university student who is contacted by an alien AI named Orgun. Orgun explains to Tomoru that he must link with him to save the Earth!

But who is Orgun? At first, he appears in Tomoru's dreams to save him from terrifying monsters. We also discover that the Earth Defense Force has been receiving mysterious transmissions from space since the year before the events of the series, and they are building Orgun from the instructions in the message. What they do not know, however, is that Orgun, a fugitive from the Evoluder planet, is on his way to Earth pursued by his ex-comrades who consider defection the worst of crimes.

Having foreseen his own destruction, Orgun is sending the message to have himself rebuilt. At the last moment, Orgun sends the last burst of the transmission which seems to contain his "personality" and the suit in the EDF laboratory wakes up. Michi Kanzaki, a young up and coming scientist in the EDF and builder of the suit is baffled by it, but her train of thought is interrupted when Orgun's pursuers attack City 5, Tomoru's home. They are looking for the new Orgun and its human-link counterpart: Tomoru.

At first, Tomoru refuses to link but the thought of saving Michi, who was also in his dreams, makes him change his mind. He links with Orgun and faces the Evoluder's sole attacker, which proves to be a tough cookie: Tomoru is barely able to defeat him. As night falls on City 5, Kumi Jefferson, a powerful psychic, announces more "destruction from the sky".

Later we learn that Orgun left his world (built and populated by warrior machines) because he was tired of war and killing. We meet his ex-commander, Rangu, and Orgun's friend (girlfriend?) Riibu. When Rangu arrives on earth, Tomoru must link up with Orgun once again, but luckily for both Tomoru and Orgun, Riibu arrives and saves the situation. At the same time, she reveals to Michi the true horror of what is going on.

**Detonator Orgun**'s story is short and to the point, making for pleasant entertainment. However, more episodes would not have hurt. The story wouldn't have lost any of its punch (especially the third part, which is rather esoteric) with a little more development and explanations. On the design and musical sides, **Detonator Orgun** was blessed with three of Japan's most talented artists. Michitaka Kikuchi's character designs are, as always, brilliantly executed and reflect the characters' personalities perfectly. The mecha designs, by Hiroyuki Hataike, place him in the same category as Shinji Aramaki (**Madox-01**, **BGC**'s motoslaves, Ex-Garland from **MZ23-III**) and Hajime Katoki (**Gundam Sentinel**, **Gundam 0083**) as far as ground breaking and cool mecha designs are concerned. The music, by P-Model, is very special and *Solar Bandolier*, the end title's song, sounds more like an incredible anthem than anything else.

Strangely, the series met only limited success, despite its quality. Perhaps it was just too weird and wild for the taste of the viewers. A commercially-subtitled version is available from U.S. Manga Corps.

## TOMORU SHINDO

A 20-year old student of City 5's university, Tomoru is, at the beginning of the story, interested in only two things: beating the newest psych-sim game and deciding what to do when he graduates — in that order. He has to change his priorities in a hurry when his dreams are invaded by an alien identity named Orgun who claims that only Tomoru can save the Earth from an upcoming alien onslaught. At first, Tomoru is reluctant to link up with Orgun but soon relents under the urgency of the situation. He is in love with Michi Kanzaki, the girl of his dreams — literally! He is also a war history freak and wears a Luftwaffe flight jacket.



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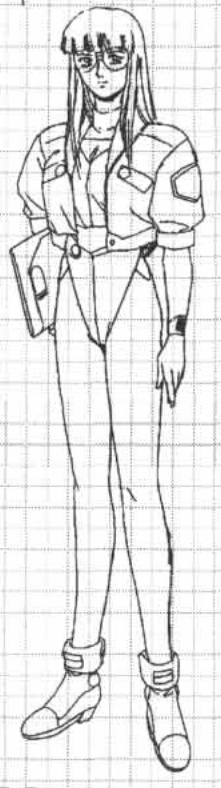
## MICHI KANZAKI



Also known as "the girl genius of the EDF", Michi is the youngest and brightest scientist of the EDF. This has put her in charge of the alien powersuit program which recreates the Orgun. In Part II, she starts having dreams similar to Tomoru's own and she starts to realize the terrible truth. Although she is very pretty, her haircut and oversized glasses are not in keeping with the fashion of the time. Maybe that's why Tomoru is so attracted to her?

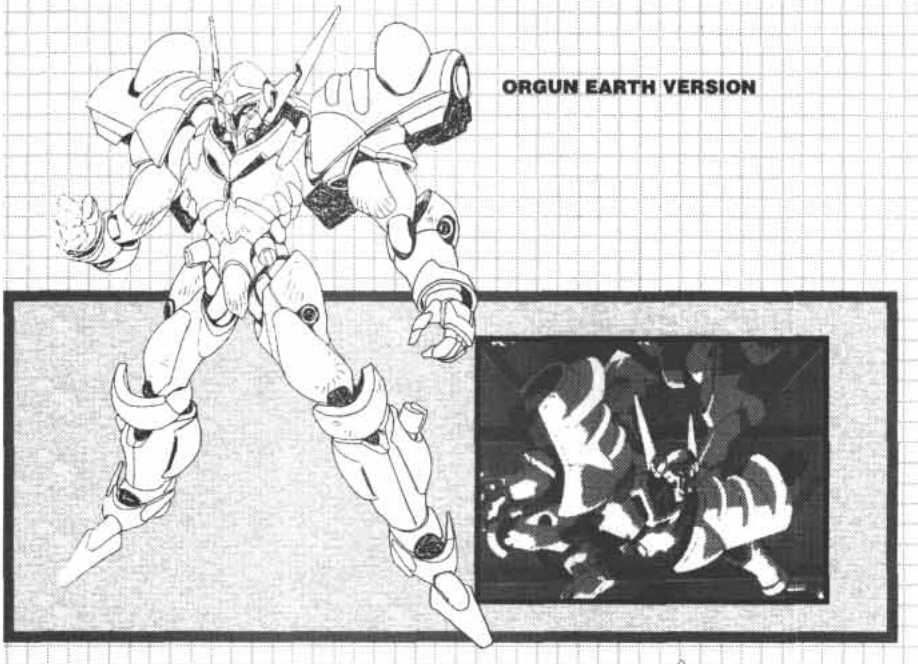
## DETONATOR ORGUN

An alien being, Orgun was one of the best soldiers of the Evoluders' army until he got sick and tired of war and decided to defect. Now branded as a renegade and hunted by his former comrades, Orgun has come to Earth to find his best link: Tomoru Shindo. Pushed by Orgun's gentle probing, Tomoru reluctantly accepts to be his partner.

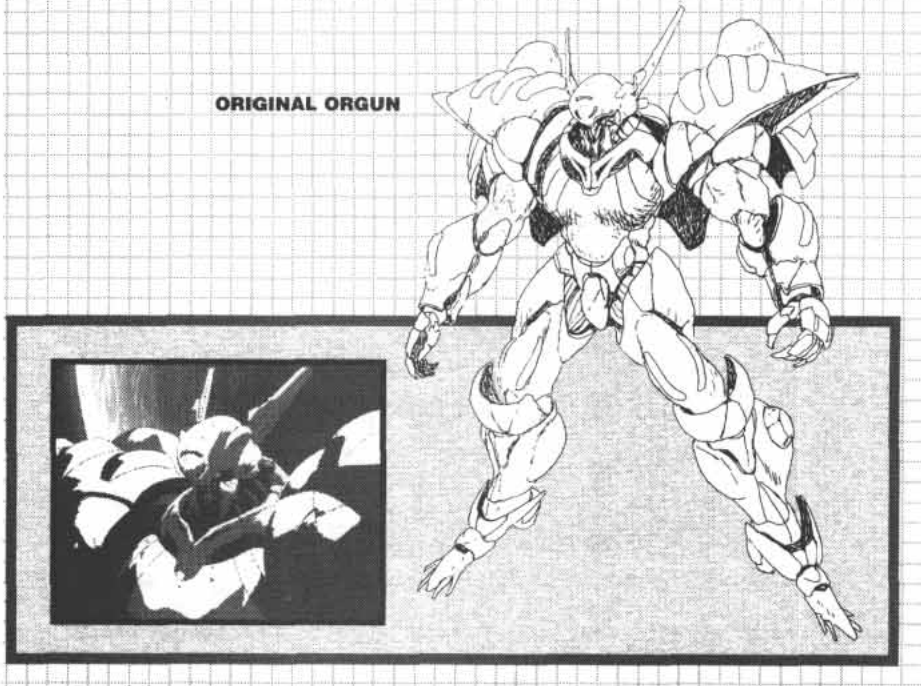
There are two Orguns. The original, which we see at the beginning of Part I and in the numerous flashbacks, and the Earth Orgun ("Michi Orgun"?). The original Orgun is destroyed at the beginning of Part I and the Earth Orgun was built, following Orgun's own specifications, by Michi Kanzaki with the help of I-Zack, the most powerful supercomputer on Earth.

Although the Earth version is extremely powerful, the original seemed even more deadly. Orgun's armament is composed of a wrist blade, needle cannons and a forehead beam blaster. In Part III, he gets other weapons, mainly a twin-bladed sword.

**ORGUN EARTH VERSION**



**ORIGINAL ORGUN**





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# ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

**by Martin Ouellette**

## Episode 11: A Look Back

Phantom Lady prays in Boro's chapel but she is interrupted by Boro and Esukai who want her to submit to an examination. When she refuses, Boro threatens her, calling her "Proto-1"; Phantom Lady yields.

Chirico is unruffled by the cops' arrival and gives his last instructions to the gang. All of Chirico's tricks are successful and they are able to get out of the stadium, on their way to the police's headquarters without being followed. When Esukai learns of Chirico's escape, he is not pleased; he is even less pleased when the mind-scanning test shows that Proto-1's first memory is of Chirico Cuvie! As he draws his gun to kill her, Boro stops him and tells Proto-1 to stop Chirico.

Chirico evades the Brutish Dog's first attack and rockets past Phantom Lady. He finds Boro first but Proto-1 engages him in hand-to-hand combat. As she starts to pound his Scopedog to shreds, Chirico uses a last-stand tactic and brings her down. She surrenders to him and Chirico suddenly realizes that they are now alone in the deserted headquarters' command tower. When Chirico asks Proto-1 her name, he is unwilling to believe that such a beautiful woman does not even have a real name...

## Episode 12: Bonds

Outside the perimeter established around the command tower, Esukai and Boro are discussing the possibilities of Proto-1 being a Merukian spy; meanwhile, Chirico is having a talk with the lady in question. It soon becomes clear that she is an unwitting pawn in Esukai's and Boro's game. Their conversation is interrupted by a platoon of cops.

Outside, a very nervous Esukai wants to lay waste to the place with a missile but Boro refuses. He proposes to send in the battlering pilots instead. Inside the tower, Chirico establish radio contact with the others, fixing a rendezvous point. Esukai gives his last instructions to the battlering pilots. Before they go in, though, Esukai orders the police choppers to fire on the tower to provoke their prey into action.

Coconna, en route to the rendezvous point with Gotho and Vanilla, begs then threatens them with Vanilla's own gun when they insist that there is nothing they can do. But in a flash, Gotho remembers the underground monorail they used the first time they went to liberate Chirico, and they head for one of the stations.

Inside the command tower, Chirico and Proto-1 are fighting a running battle with the enemy pilots as they try to get to ground level. At one of the lower levels, they are jumped by a team of bazooka-wielding cops who blow Proto-1 straight out of her AT's cockpit. Chirico screams "Fyana!!", skates his Scopedog near her and cradles her in the mecha's arms as he rockets away. Once he finds some shelter, he stops and asks Proto-1 if she is alright. Her only answer is that she likes the name he called her. "Can I keep it?" Chirico does not know what to say.

Under her direction, Chirico nearly gets the Scopedog out of the building but a barrage blows one of the AT's arms, sending Fyana flying in the air and the Scopedog through a wall, right in front of Gotho and the others. They shout for him to get on their vehicle, but Chirico only wants to go save Fyana, who is being dragged away by the cops.

At that moment, the Merukian army, under the orders of Rochina, starts its attack to clean up the mess made by Esukai. Bombs fall on the base as dozens and dozens of Merukian 'Dogs are dropped by parachute, opening fire on everything as they land.

## Episode 13: The Escape

As the Merukians mop up the police forces, Rochina contacts Esukai and Boro and tells them to surrender... or else. He refrains himself for he knows that Proto-1, the perfect soldier prototype, is with them. Esukai, out of sheer hopelessness, contacts his boss, Albert Kiri, for help. Kiri is not happy but obliges. Esukai will hold the base as long as he can while Boro takes Proto-1 to safety via helicopter. Rochina, seeing that the two traitors have no intentions of surrendering, orders his troops to go in and do their worse.

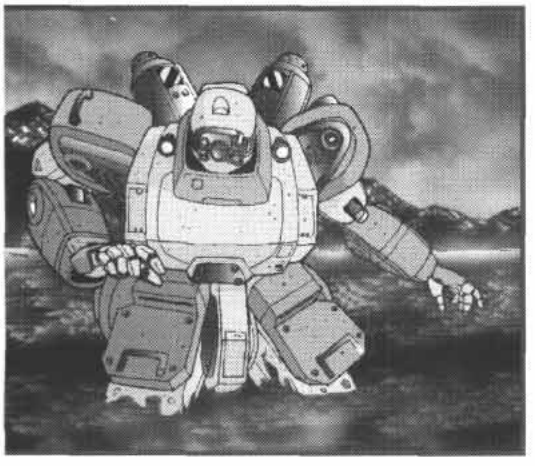
Riding on the underground monorail, Chirico and the others are suddenly stopped by a cave-in. Chirico soon discovers that the source of the disturbance is a group of Merukian Scopedogs which bear the same markings as those he fought on Rid so long ago. As they continue on foot, Chirico explains who Fyana is to Gotho and that it is clearly her that the Merukian army wants to take back.



Raymond P Campiglio (Order : 33181648)

# HEAVY GEAR FIGHTER MISHAPS

by Jean Carrières



These cards are bad things which happen in combat — unexpected things that weaken your opponent's Heavy Gear. Normally, everything you pick from the deck is to your advantage. Now, the **Mishap** cards allow you to put your foe at a disadvantage. They can be played at any time during a Turn, but since their effect lasts a whole Turn, they are best used right at the start.

The first thing to do is to take them out of the magazine. They must be carefully cut following the white hairline on the inside of the cards. We strongly recommend the use of a very sharp hobby knife and a metal ruler. Take your time while cutting the cards out. Although it is of no great importance, it would be best to avoid damaging them in any way which would make the **Mishap** cards recognizable from the back. For our own in-house use, we traced a deep cut with the knife along the dotted line, then carefully used scissors to avoid ripping the cards' edges.

All the **Mishap** cards last for one full Turn. Once the Turn is over, the pilot can take all of them and put them in the discard pile.

**Here are the cards definitions:**

## Slow:

A player with this card is slowed down because of rougher terrain or a defective tread. Moving from one range to another will cost double the normal amount for the duration of the Turn only.

## Glitch:

The computer temporarily refused to recognize one of the Gear's Moves. The victim's opponent selects one of this victim's Moves. For the duration of the Turn only, this Move cannot be used.

## Minefield:

The pilot finds himself trapped in a minefield. His Gear immediately takes a 50 Structure Points (SP), 4 Overload Levels (OL) Green hit (armor rating applies). For the rest of the Turn, he will take such an attack every time he moves from one range to another. At the end of the Turn, it is assumed that he has found a safe way out of the mine field.

## Sluggish:

The Gear suddenly lacks responsiveness. -2 Actions for this Turn.

## Overheat:

The Gear overheats and becomes overly sensitive to Overload. For the duration of the Turn, double every point of Overload taken.

## Ammo Jam:

The opponent selects one of the Gear's Move which requires ammo (•). This Move cannot be used for the duration of the Turn.

## Shutdown:

For the duration of the Turn, the Gear is unstable and threatens to shut down. Should the Gear be Overloaded at any time during the Turn, he will be immediately unable to move and will not be able to do so until the end of **next** Turn. He can **only** play Defensive cards, Evasion cards and Flexibility cards (for defensive purposes only) until then.

## Vulnerability:

The pilot's opponent finds a weak spot in the Gear and launches a series of attacks against that spot during the Turn. Divide all armor ratings by two, rounding **down** to the nearest zero (i.e. a rating of 30 becomes 10, not 15).

## Scared:

The pilot becomes worried about his opponent's superiority. The opponent takes (and keeps) two cards from the pilot's hand (if different/personalized decks are used, then the opponent does **not** keep the cards — they are discarded instead).

## Berserker:

The Heavy Gear goes combat crazy and refuses to use any Green or Blue card during this turn. Also, it cannot retreat in any way. All its attacks do 50% more damage, however, so it can be considered a mixed blessing. The player who draws this card can also play it on himself, if he so wishes.

## Cowardice:

The Heavy Gear is suddenly afraid of taking damage. All Red cards become the equivalent of ALL (High/Torso/Low locations) Blue cards. The pilot cannot attack during the Turn except with Green Moves. The player who draws his card can also play it on himself, if he so wishes.

## Cornered:

The Gear is cornered and cannot retreat out of range in any way. The opponent's Moves are ALL at -1 Action Cost for the duration of the Turn.



Raymond P Campiglia (Order : 3318648)

# HEAVY GEAR FIGHTER QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**by Jean Carrières**

There were many questions which popped up following our playtests, some of which were briefly explained in the rulebook, but some others were left out because it had seemed obvious to us at the time. We include them here so that those of you who find it hard to reach us can get their answers right away.

## How do I set up the game? What are the counters for?

Cut the counters using either scissors or a hobby knife and a metal ruler. Use them to keep track of how many Structure Points, Actions and Overload levels you have. You should use two green counters for the Structure (place one on the highest value in the hundreds, and one on the "0" in the tens), a green one for the Actions (place it on the highest number listed) and a red one for the Overloads (place it left of the first Overload star). Move them according to whatever Structure damage you take, Action points you spend and Overload you take. You can also use the counters to keep track of how many shots you have used on a limited shot Move by stacking one for every time you use it, and flip it to black once you have used all the shots.

## What are the range counters? How do I use them?

The range counters are these little counters with the color Heavy Gears. After you have cut them, you can use them to keep track of the range between your Heavy Gears. On a sheet of paper, draw a line such as the ones in Figure 1. When the distance between your Heavy Gear changes, place the counters on the appropriate locations. Remember that you must spend 2 Action points to move from one range to the other!

## Can a Move cost 0 Action Points?

No. No matter what, even if the Move is at -1 Actions, there is a minimum Action Cost of 1.

## What's the difference between X-ranged, Ranged and Fire & Forget?

Fire & Forget: You're at medium range or closer, you shoot **something** at your opponent, and you remain where you are.

Ranged: You start at medium range (or in short range) and you end up in short range. You perform some attack in the process.

X-ranged: You start at medium range and end up in medium range, after having performed a close-in-attack-and-go-away maneuver. While it seems no different from having a Ranged (R) and Keep Away (K) attack, it's an all-or-nothing option. You can't use it to stay in short range or to move away from melee to medium range (something you can do when you have both the R and K options).

## Can we fight with more than two Heavy Gears?

Not yet, but there will be multi-players rules in an upcoming **Mecha Press**.

## Can we create custom decks like in Magic: the Gathering®?

No. No. No. No. No. No. No. We hope we are very clear about that. The game would be pretty boring if you did ("What? Another *Red* card?!"). **Heavy Gear Fighter** simply does not work on the same principle.

## What is the *Prototype* card for? Do we have to use it?

The **Prototype** card allows you to select two Strategy options of your choice among those available in the game. It is a **very** powerful card and should not be used in tournaments or for regular one-on-one games. We have included it for use with the **Heavy Gear** RPG (to be released in Fall 1994) as a roleplaying option: the GM can insert the card in the deck if he has decided that one of the players should be piloting a prototype Heavy Gear; whoever draws the card happens to have the prototype (not usable for NPCs, naturally).

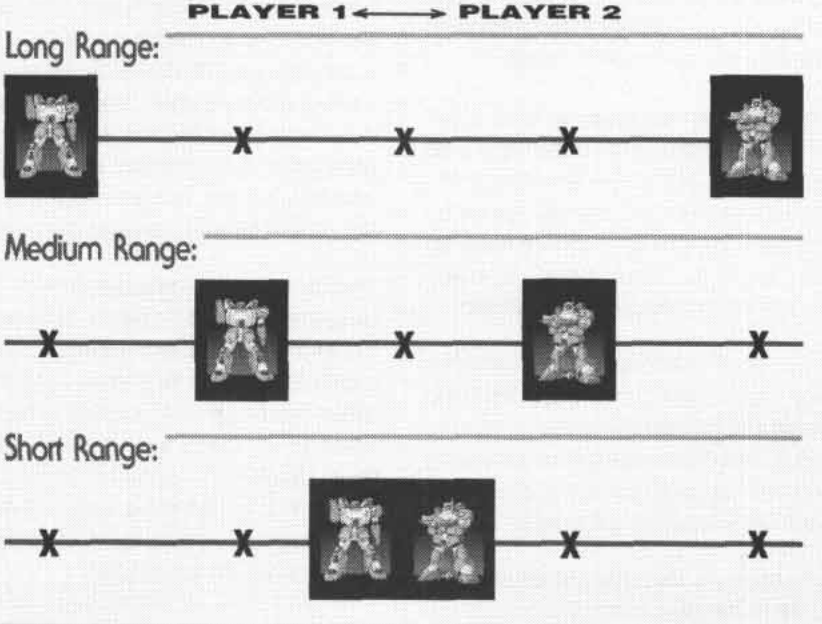
## How many cards do we have to play with any one Move?

Only one. Although you may have many options in many cases, you only have to play **one** of the applicable cards (A, U, • or *) to succeed a Move. Playing more than that is not allowed (and useless anyway).

## How do I get answers to my other questions?

Write to us or, if you have Internet access, E-mail to mordred@vectrex.login.qc.ca (Jean Carrières, game designer) or dp9@vectrex.login.qc.ca (Dream Pod 9). We welcome your feedback and suggestions!

**Figure 1**






Raymond P Campiglia (Order : 3318164)

# MECHA SYNOPSIS

Inside the headquarters, it is time for Esukai to pay for his crimes as an explosion sends him into oblivion. A radio message gives Chirico the idea that Fyana could be going to the heliport. At the heliport, Boro and Fyana trick the Merukian sentries and gain access to Fyana's apartment, where she takes a long overdue Jijirium shower. Nothing prepares her for Chirico's surprise appearance and she protests when he says that he wants to take her with him. At that moment, a firefight starts outside as the Merukian ATs approach the heliport. As Boro and Fyana get into a chopper, the reinforcements promised by Albert Kiri arrive and start to wipe out the Merukians. The Secret Society's ATs, Standing Tortoises, are unstoppable and soon the base is the site of a total rout. Separated from Gotho and the others, Chirico can only hope to escape to find both Fyana and the answers to his questions...

# K U M M E N

## Episode 14: Assemble EX-10

Rochina is still on Chirico's trail as Chirico enters the territory of Kummen. Kummen is humid, covered with dense jungles and swamps. As Chirico's tracer signal bleeps on Rochina's screen, Rochina realizes that Chirico will be hard to follow from now on. During that time, Chirico is on his way to the base of Assemble EX-10, a mercenary unit he signed up with.

Except for an insignificant attack by Bera guerrilla fighters, Chirico gets to the base safely and is given his personal code number: 85. He then meets the base commander, Gon Ner, and his executive officer Kuan Yu. When the meeting is finished, Chirico wanders in the base's corridor and stumbles on Gotho.

As they walk, they are stopped by Yu. He orders Chirico to follow him as a beacon signal was detected in his shoulder — he could be a Merukian spy. After the beacon is removed, Yu interrogates Chirico, but is stopped by Ner when the commander learns that Chirico is after the "perfect soldier". Yu is very displeased and glances belligerently at Chirico.

At night, Gotho brings Chirico to his club, named the "Fantam Club". Coconna is now a singer and Vanilla is the barman. Chirico sits down and starts to talk to his friends, but Kuan Yu enters the club and start bullying Chirico. As the argument heats up, a violent explosion is heard. The Bera guerrilla is attacking EX-10.

Chirico boards his Marshydog and follows Kuan's unit. Once in the jungle, Kuan orders Chirico to take the lead and go after the guerrilla. The Bera ATs attack, led by a blue AT. As Chirico fights it, there are signs that the pilot could be Fyana. At one moment, Chirico gets out of his Marshydog and orders the blue AT's pilot to stop. Amazingly, it works, but only for a few seconds as the pilot, targeting Chirico, blows his Marshydog to kingdom come...

## Episode 15: Suspicions

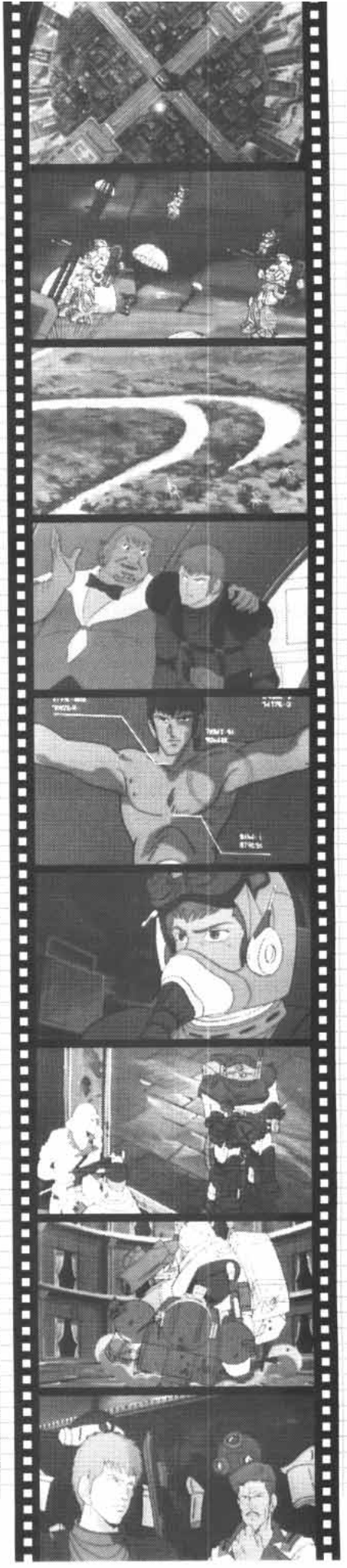
As Chirico draws his gun for the last stand, Kuan Yu and his men open fire on the blue AT and drive it back. Later, in Ner's office, Chirico is severely scolded by Kuan for having lost his AT. However, Ner lets Chirico go after learning that the young soldier found the "perfect soldier".

Chirico enters the Fantam Club and Coconna starts to sing for him. Later, Bully Kidera, one of Chirico's teammates, arrives and start bugging him about the loss of his Marshydog. The argument becomes serious, until Paul Poteria, another teammate, stops it. As Kidera goes drinking with Poteria, Chirico notices a man wearing a cloak who leaves a suitcase on the floor and exits the club. Chirico senses danger and throws the suitcase outside where it explodes. Kidera looks very foolish as he tried to stop Chirico, thinking it was an ordinary suitcase.

After Gotho closes the club, he drives Chirico to his place and explains what the Bera guerrilla are. Kanjielman, the king of Kummen, is their leader and they follow him blindly. Since Chirico now thinks that a perfect soldier is helping them, he wants to reprogram a mission disk to deal with the situation.

In the morning, Chirico, Kuan Yu and the team leave for their mission, which consists of protecting a barge coming back to the EX-10 base. The trip goes well, until the barge grounds itself. Chirico is designated to install a winch to get the boat out. He secures the cable and signals to start reeling when a flight of missiles scream over his head. He only has time to warn the others and his Marshydog is thrown off a small cliff.

When Chirico wakes up, a general melee is on — and his own sight is then filled with the Bera's leader's blue AT coming at him like a runaway train. Chirico only has time to insert the special mission disk he prepared and the fight starts in earnest. As he tries to defend his life, Chirico wonders if he is fighting Fyana. The others, having finished off their opponents, come to lend him a hand. The blue AT retreats into the jungle. Now Chirico knows: he was fighting a perfect soldier. But was it Fyana?





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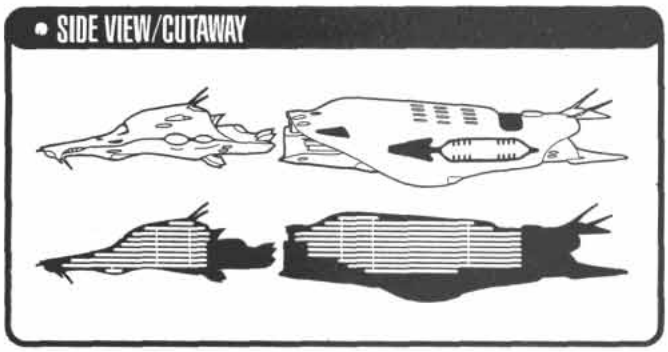


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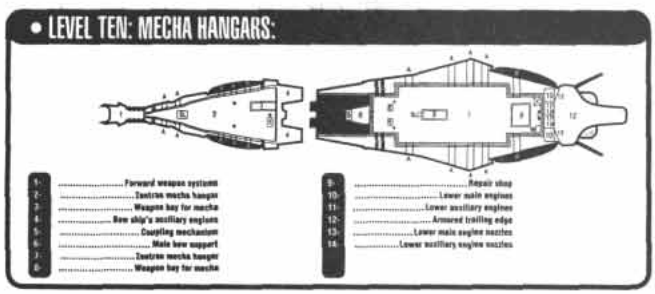


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# MOONLIGHT MECHANIX

## WHAT'S MOONLIGHT MECHANIX

by Jean Carrières

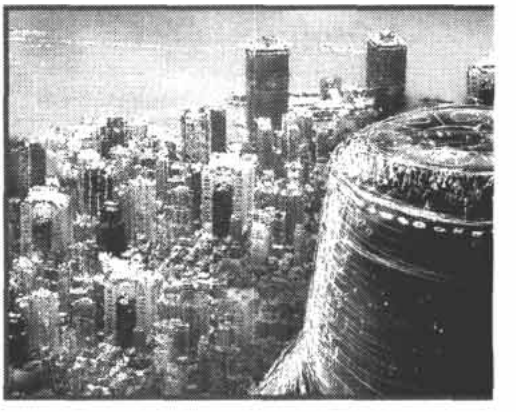
The first the world ever heard of **Moonlight Mechanix** was through **Safety Zone '93: Behemoth Big Brother**. That first series, released in 1984, was produced by DEAN studios and knew only a mitigated success. This lack of popularity has been attributed (at least by fans, if not by specialists) to the overwhelming problems that plagued the series throughout its release time: the toy sponsors backed out of the toys deal; the promised 4 PM time slots on weekdays were cancelled and replaced by 5 AM on Mondays; some voice actors broke their contracts in mid-season; and, to top it all off, the creative team asked for a raise and for working conditions which DEAN studios could not afford at the time. In the end, after 22 episodes, **Behemoth Big Brother** died an honorable (and cataclysmic) death and was cancelled by the producers. It never went into syndication, having not met the minimal season requirements, but was aired on cable channels at God-forsaken hours. Nonetheless, despite its somewhat hacked storyline, it developed a cult following and remained on air for about a year after its official cancellation. In the meantime, DEAN studios went on to work on **Lightning Armor Zamigar**, an action packed, high adventure spinoff from a video game mentioned *en passant* in **Behemoth Big Brother**.

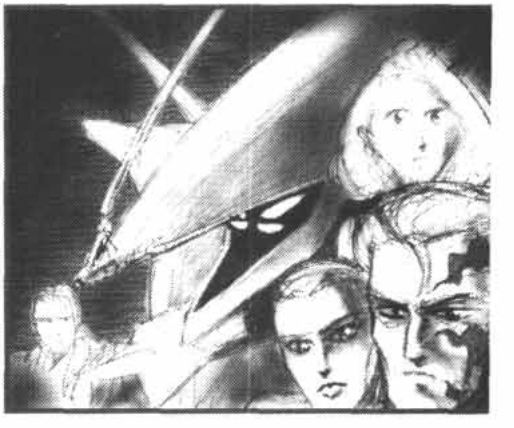
However, in 1986, a creative team was once more hired by DEAN studios to attempt to rekindle the series with an OVA. In order to insure graphics quality, a new team of hotshot mecha designers was added to the series' roster: IDA, a group of young Japanese designers with radically new ideas. This time, Yamamori Mayasuki — head of the studios — decided to shift the focus of the story from action and mecha to romance and relationships. It proved to be a good choice, and the OVA, called **Fragments**, did so well that the studios easily found backers to start the following series, **Flight of the Icarus** (**Icarus Tobimate** in original Japanese).

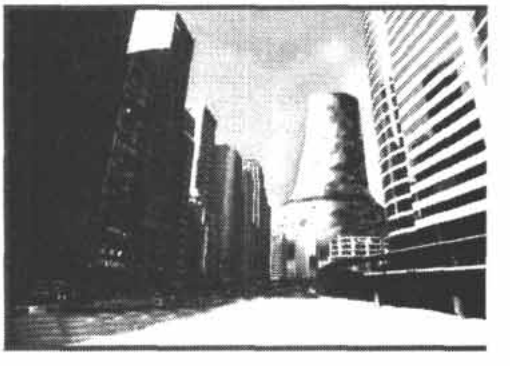
**Danger Zone '98: Flight of the Icarus** (the series' full title), which began airing in Japan late in 1987, picked up right where the OVA left off and focused on the love triangle between two men and a woman, and used as a backdrop the story of a doomed exploration aircraft. The attention to minute social and political details thrilled most viewers, and the soft, romantic storyline between Tygger, Atani and Daniel Oshimi somehow attracted throngs of female viewers which were normally avoiding mecha shows such as **Moonlight Mechanix**.

There are rumors that DEAN studios have been planning the release of a new series, titled **Ad Astra**, but it is unknown at this time when it occurs and what happens in it. What is certain is that the ending of the Moonlight Mechanix series was a cliffhanger of epic proportions (not unlike that of Grey: Digital Target), and that it is anyone's guess that a follow-up would have to be soon after the end of the series.

And, after all those countless hours of tube watching, we are still puzzled as to who Corina is.





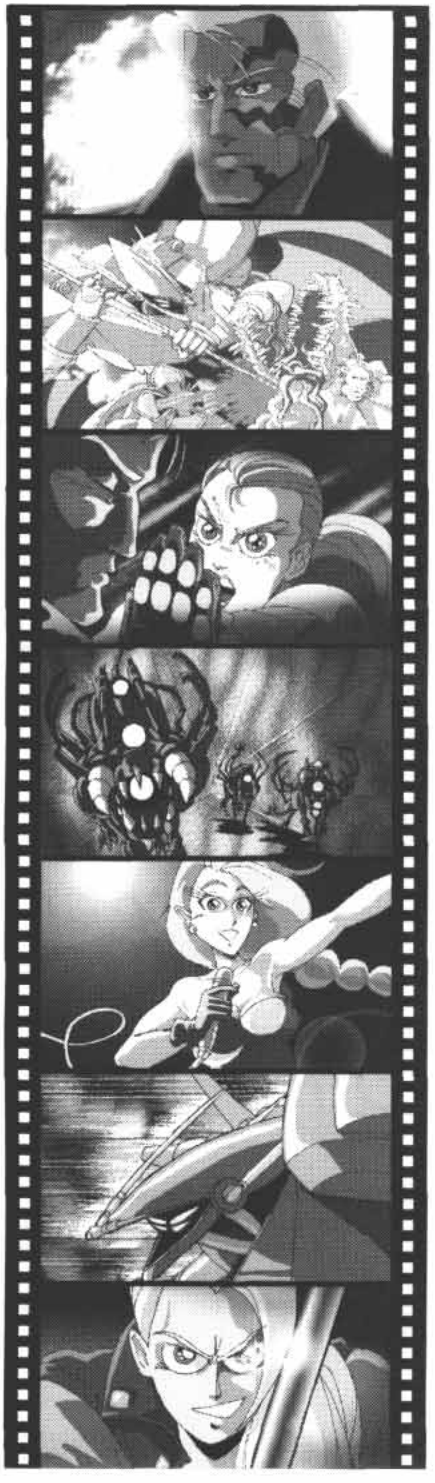




Raymond P Campiglia (Order - 53181643)

# MOONLIGHT MECHANIX OVERVIEW

By Jean Carrières



## Safety Zone '93: Behemoth Big Brother

On a planet called Aurora, a civilization of humans thrives. Humans have very little to do, most of the menial chores being taken care of by supercomputer **Behemoth**, a machine of such complexity that no one understands how it works anymore. However, some mysterious superstar singer (**Corina**) appears out of nowhere and gives to Comtech, a small software company, technological files (the *Corina Files*) which provide its owner, **David Ishimako**, with the means to build powerful personal combat armors. He is given a warning, however: he must use them to prepare against impending trouble. However, before he can ask any more questions, **Corina** disappears and he is left to work on his own. **Ishimako** gathers around him such exceptional invididuals as **Daino Mayasu**, **Celia Hefferman**, **Dosan Tachibana** ("Silverado") and **John McTaggert** ("Tygger"). In the meantime, the Government Agency for Tracking and Extermination (GATE) fails to find where **Corina** has gone and begins to antagonize Comtech to get their hands on this new technology.

Only a few months later, a horde of dragonriding Mutants attacks the city and while the army is well-equipped, it cannot resist the unexpected onslaught. Millions die and Comtech intervenes *in extremis*, revealing to the world its latest secret weapon, the **Zephyr** mecha. The Mutants retreat. It is finally understood that humans have not been living on the surface of Aurora, but inside a **Safety Zone** buried deep inside it.

Now that Comtech is revealed as a source of military technology, the government, the underground mob and other technological consortiums all attempt separately to steal the **Zephyr**, and Comtech is finally forced to surround itself in an impenetrable force field to avoid any more trouble. However, as it seems that the Mutants have been successfully repelled, **Behemoth** itself becomes defective and gradually disables access to its higher-level functions. Comtech specialists finally realize that **Behemoth** has become an AI and is bent on destroying everybody. While investigating this problem, **Tygger** finds a certain **Atani Shimiko**, a **Corina** look-alike, who sheds some light on the mysterious singer's identity. Unfortunately, the situation cannot be helped and **Behemoth** murders everyone save a thousand individuals by freezing the Zone to death. The Zoners escape to the surface.

## Danger Zone '98: Flight of the Icarus

Five years after **Behemoth**, the Zoners have established themselves in Nu City, building their civilization upon the ruins of a city they found nearby their abandoned Zone. **Behemoth** is buried but not forgotten, and the inhabitants of Nu City decide to build the **Icarus**, an armored exploration aircraft which would allow them to safely travel the world and discover other Zones like theirs.

Unfortunately, not everything is fine about the new ship, and people discover that although "purified" by their Exodus in 1193, the society aboard the airship is by no means perfect and they are about to make the same mistakes all over again. To make matters worse, they discover that the Mutants and their dragons are not the only beings inhabiting Aurora's surface, but that there are also the gentle Neomani psychics and the technologically advanced Techron cyborgs.

As the story progresses, Cybertech (a corporation which was formed to manage Comtech's technologies after **Ishimako**'s death during the Exodus) hires various talented individuals and turns them into a special task force in order to solve the problems and mysteries with which the Icarus and her crew face each episode. The complex relationships and love triangles that occur during the series are probably its prominent characteristic and no doubt the very reason why this series did much better than **Behemoth Big Brother**.

## Neutral Zone '00: Ad Astra

Rumors have it that the Icarus has crashed at the end of **Flight of the Icarus** in its fight against the Techrons. This series is said to happen only a year or two after **Flight**, and involved the invasion of Aurora by warlike aliens.



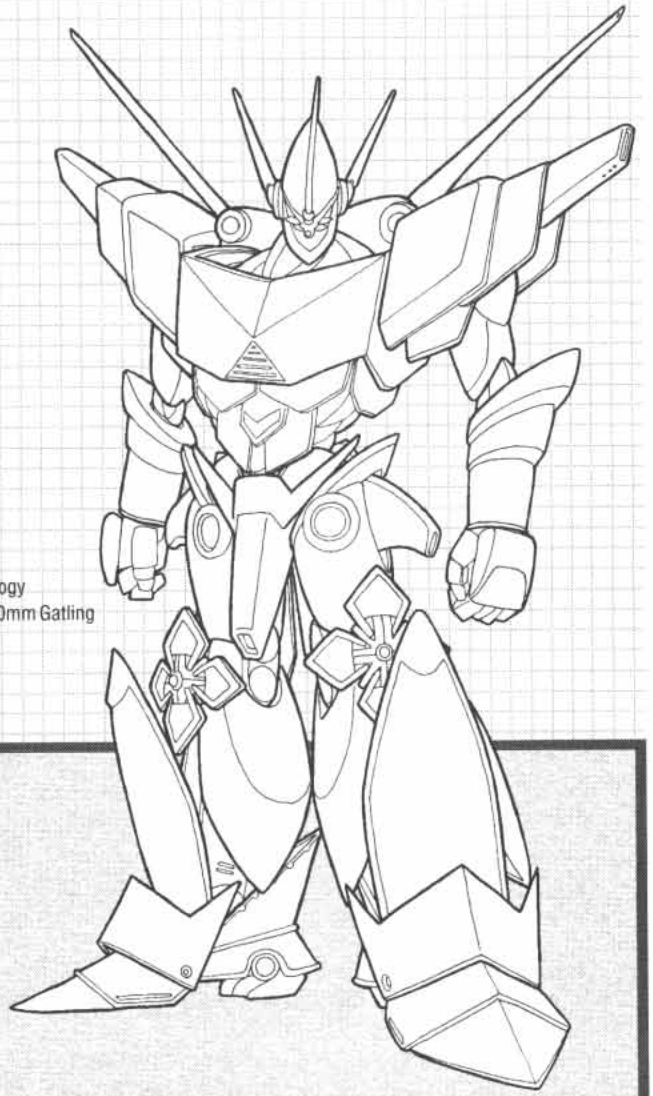
Raymond P. Campiglio (Order # 3316148)

## ZEPHYR [ALPHA] - ZPH-001

The Zephyr mecha is still a mystery, even to its makers. Because there was no time to understand what was in the *Corina Files*, it was decided to use some technological 'modules' as is, without modifications, in hope that nothing would go wrong. This blind use of supertechnology was called the 'black box' procedure: plugging something at one end of the box would lead to a result at the other end of the box, but understanding what happened in-between was out of the question. In other words, there are many parts in the Zephyr which no one really understood.

Contrary to the star mecha of many series, the Zephyr was never particularly powerful. It performed fairly well in combat, but it was its unusual size and agility which surprised its opponents, not its destructive output. The Zephyr Alpha, the first of the series, was rather small and light. It was equipped with one long combat lance, a 40 mm gatling cannon and a twin set of minilasers.

In **Flight of the Icarus**, it was upgraded to the Beta version: more armor, more powerful flight thrusters and heavier weaponry. Also — more importantly — the Beta version was mass-produced, whereas the Alpha from **Behemoth Big Brother** always remained a unique prototype. Celia Hefferman was the only one who pilored the Zephyr Alpha, except in episode 13, when she is injured and must relinquish the mecha to Daino Mayasu.



**Name:** Zephyr Alpha
**Code:** ZPH-001
**Use:** Defense Mecha Prototype
**Height:** 7.8 meters
**Weight:** 6.2 tons
**Powerplant:** Black Box Technology
**Armament:** Combat Lance x 1, 40mm Gatling Gun x 1, Lasergun x 2

# MOONLIGHT CHARACTERS

**by Jean Carrières**

### DAINO MAYASU

A swordfighting streetkid, Daino, now 18, works for David Ishimako and helps save humans from both Mutants and Behemoth. As the series progresses, he gradually falls in love with GATE agent Sylvia "Magie" Crane.

### JOHN "TYGGER" MCTAGGERT

Apparently the sole survivor of the Cybercop project, cyborg Tygger is more machine than man. He teams up with David Ishimako because he seems to be the only man Corina is willing to talk to. In the process, Tygger falls in love and begins to long for his lost humanity.



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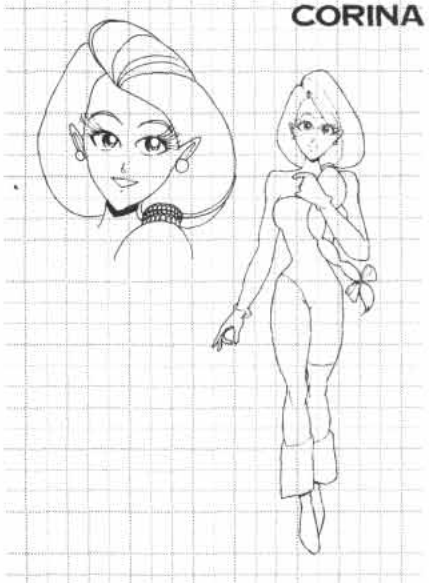
## DOSAN "SILVERADO" TACHIBANA

Team leader for one of GATE's most prominent investigating teams, Silverado joins forces with David Ishimako on a temporary basis as a link between GATE and Comtech. He and his team are among the first to discover the trouble brewing in Behemoth.

## CORINA

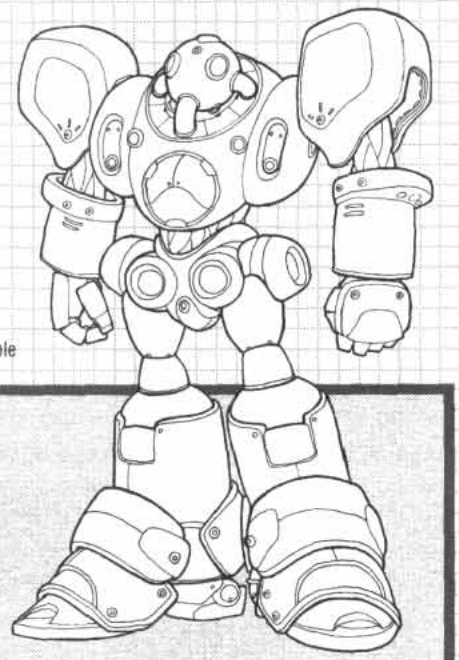


Initially thought to be only a superstar singer, she is later discovered to have provided David Ishimako with the 'Corina Files', which contain technological wonders. It is suspected that she is not entirely human, but her disappearance just as the series begins prevents anyone from finding out exactly who — or what — she is.

## DIADRONE - BHT-23D

Dynamic Intelligent Animated Drones. There are thousands of them, and they have always been under Behemoth's control for as long as even GATE itself can remember. They were initially created as service drones, but because of their expert learning system, they could become specialists at just about any task through heuristic use of a prudent trial-and-error routine. As such, the DIAdrones could (and did) rapidly become fierce fighters should the need arise.

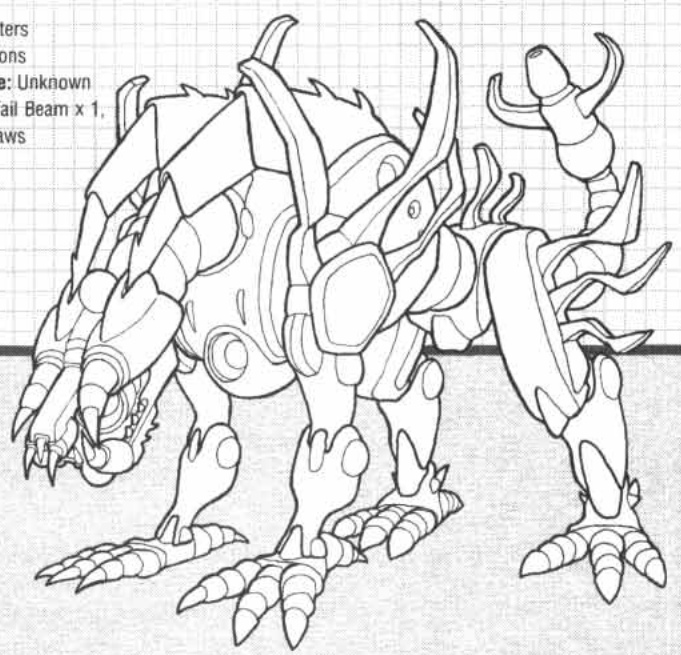
**Height:** 4 meters
**Weight:** 2 tons
**Armament:** Variable



## WOLF - WLF-53V

Interestingly enough, the Wolf automated fighters were never designed inside the Behemoth Safety Zone. They were part of the first attack wave which the Mutants sent when they invated the Zone, and they quickly weakened any opposition ahead of them. It made the Mutants' job that much simpler. It was soon discovered that they had no known energy source and that their behavior much resembled that of real wolves.

**Lenght:** 2 meters
**Weight:** 0.5 tons
**Power Source:** Unknown
**Armament:** Tail Beam x 1, Fangs and Claws





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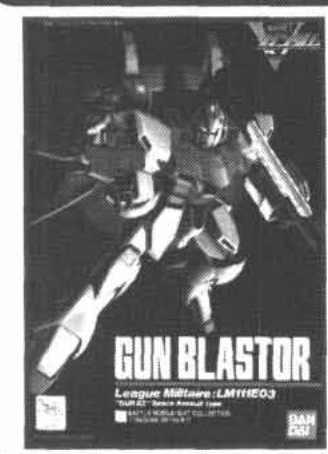
NAME: LM312V04 V-Dash Gundam SCALE: 1/144
MATERIAL: Injected plastic w/polyethylene articulations

The V-Dash is an upgraded version of the basic Victory Gundam, and so is this kit. In addition to the standard V-Gundam parts, pieces to build the core fighter, V-Dash backpack and Hexa-V-Gundam head are provided.

The kit is mostly molded in the correct colors. The only exceptions are the Core Fighter and the backpack, which are entirely white, except for the antennae. However, by using the eye decals, one can get a nice looking replica without even handling glue and paint.

The model is not transformable. The backpack is mostly hollow, which is very annoying because this can be seen from many angles. Unfortunately, the antennae are once again molded in soft yellow plastic.

NAME: LM111E03 Gun Blastor SCALE: 1/144
MATERIAL: Injected plastic w/polyethylene articulations




The Gun Blastor is molded in light green and dark blue plastic, both of which are very close to the correct colors of the suit's paint scheme. The kit includes the usual options: a clear stand, two beam sabers (one straight, one curved), a beam shield and a very nice, if fragile, bazooka. The kit also includes the torso parts to make a standard Gun EZ.

The molding of the model is flawless and even the head-mounted cannons are hollow. Mobility is surprisingly good for a model of this size, and the various armor plates are very flexible. The thruster "wings" are mounted on ball sockets, which give them better than average mobility.

Painting is relatively easy, as the only truly multicolored part is the front torso piece.

NAME: LM314V21 V2 Gundam SCALE: 1/144
MATERIAL: Injected plastic w/polyethylene articulations

The Victory-2 Gundam is quite different from its smaller brother. The suit is slightly bigger and definitively more imposing than the V1, probably because of the thruster "wings" on its back.

The kit is molded in many colors using the Systeminjection™ process so that almost all parts are the correct colors. The kit also includes the usual options: a clear stand, two beam sabers (one straight, one curved), a beam shield and two "wing sabers".

The molding of the model is slightly below average for a V-Gundam kit. The suit is not very mobile (pun intended), and the feet have almost no clearance. Other than that, it is an attractive miniature.

# V-GUNDAM MODELS PART II

**By the Dream Pod 9 modeling team**

In our last issue we examined six of the 1/144 **Victory Gundam** plastic model kits from Bandai. The V-Gundam model series has been rapidly expanding, and now most if not all of the mobile suits featured in the animation are available in one form or another. This article evaluates six other kits from the 1/144 plastic line.

## OVERVIEW

All Victory Gundam models share a similar box with a nice painted illustration on the cover. Some boxes are more packed than others due to the complexity of some of the models.

Because of the storyline, which introduced technological advances, the mobile suits have shrunk in size. Although they are billed as 1/144 scale, the models are about the same size as the old 1/220 kits. However, there has been no loss of quality.

Many kits use the Systeminjection™ process to provide multi-colored parts on the same runner. Also included in many kits are a transparent stand, a sticker sheet and a color backdrop card to mount on the stand.

All models use the same V-Frame™ system, a set of rubber articulations which allow the modeler to snapfit the model very rapidly. It also makes the suits very flexible and capable of many interesting poses. Unfortunately, the rubber doesn't take paint well, which means that a properly finished model will still look a bit like a toy. The alternatives are to cover



Raymond P Campiglio (Order # 33161643)

the rubber with thin plastic or mold resin replacement parts, which is not within everyone's capability.

## BUILDING TIPS

The V-Frame imposes a new method of assembling the kit which is somewhat easier on the modeler. Most of the parts can be assembled without their articulations, which greatly simplifies painting because it reduces the necessary masking.

The best procedure is to first dry-fit the model to get a good feel of the way the parts are assembled. Do not apply any of the decals provided in the kit, as they may leave a residue on the surface when removed.

Note any detail or shape that you would like to change or improve, then dissassemble the model carefully. Put all polyethylene parts aside, except those that must be included between two plastic parts, and glue the plastic pieces together. Use styrene sheets and epoxy putty to make the changes you noted down. By using pipe cleaners or toothpicks to hold the parts, it is very easy to paint them up, detail them and varnish them.

Once this is done, simply reassemble the model with the polyethylene articulations, and the model is done. Although all V-Gundam kits are articulated, it is recommended that once a suitable posture is found, the kit be glued to prevent any damage — the polyethylene streches and looses its capacity to hold the kit together over time.

## CONCLUSION

The simplicity and beauty of these kits makes them perfect choices either as an introduction to modeling or as miniatures for gaming. Indeed, the size of the suits and the fact that they have build-in stands allow them to be used in any game, including Mecha!, Mekton (3D rules were published in Mecha Press #3) and the upcoming Silhouette™ Game System from Dream Pod 9.

**NAME:** ZM-S14S Contio **SCALE:** 1/144
**MATERIAL:** Injected plastic w/polyethylene articulations

The Contio was one of Chronixle's many mobile suits. It features large pincers/beam cutters on its shoulders and a triple cluster of beam cannons in the chest.

The kit is molded in burgundy and pink plastic, plus the usual purple clear sabers/stand runner, the same as the one found in the Rig Shokew kit. The shoulders' claws are provided in both open and closed positions (one shoulder only), and the shoulders rotate to accommodate them.

The kit suffers from several defects which include poorly fitting shoulder and head articulations and too many visible hollow parts. The shoulder units, lower legs and torso should also have been made bigger, and the legs are too long and thin.

**NAME:** RGM-122 Javelin **SCALE:** 1/144
**MATERIAL:** Injected plastic w/polyethylene articulations

The Javelin is the newest space GM (General Model) of the Federation in the Victory Gundam timeline.

The model is molded in a crisp blue-green plastic; a few parts, mostly the backpack, are molded in dark grey plastic. The kit contains the usual accessories, such as beam sabers, beam shield, gun and stand. The casting on our sample was flawless, even better than the usual high quality of the V Gundam kits.

The only problem with the model is that the backpack-mounted cannons are somewhat hard to place in a suitable firing position. Other than that, the model is quite good.

**NAME:** ZM-S06G Zollidia **SCALE:** 1/144
**MATERIAL:** Injected plastic w/polyethylene articulations

The Zollidia is an improved version of the common Zoloat mobile suit. This kit is molded in black and red plastic. The kit also includes the Zollidia's heavy gatling cannon, an impressive weapon for sure!

The kit goes together well, although the shoulder's mobile shield mount can causes problems. Its delicate articulations are easy to damage and are better either not played with or simply glued in place.

The proportions of the machine are slightly off: the legs are too long, giving the model an elongated look. The model looks better with the Zoloat head (provided). Also, the kit does not include a stand and the beam shield and sabers are molded in opaque red plastic.

Raymond P Campiglio (Order - 3316148)

# THE BASICS OF MECHA MODELING

## PART 2

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

**By the DP9 Modeling Team**

*The Basics of Mecha Modeling* is an ongoing series about, what else, mecha modeling. It is primarily intended for beginner-level modelers, but it is the authors' hope that even long-time plastic bashers will find something useful in these pages.

The series is a direct result of the queries many of the readers addressed to us since the magazine began. Many wanted to get into mecha modeling, but had no idea on how to do it. The Pod team thus sat down and laid down on paper the observations of years of modeling experience. We sincerely hope it will help make the pursuit of this hobby easier for many readers.

Now that you have chosen a suitable model for your degree of experience, you will need tools to assemble and paint it properly. Some tools may seem costly at first, but if properly cared for they will last for many years. One of our team members, Martin Ouellette, as been using the same X-Acto knife and paintbrushes for the last twenty years!

In this article, you will find a list of the tools you should have in your possession at the start of your modeling career. These tools will serve throughout your modeling career, so it is a good idea to buy quality instruments. We will also list a few tools that are optional but useful once you get to a higher level of experience.

## BASIC EQUIPMENT

### THE HOBBY KNIFE:

The quintessential modeling tool, it is the one you should choose with the most care. We recommend the knives with a safety lock for the beginners. They have a large handle, providing a good grip, and you can retract the blade when it is not used. One blade will last you many months; replacement blades are also readily available and inexpensive.

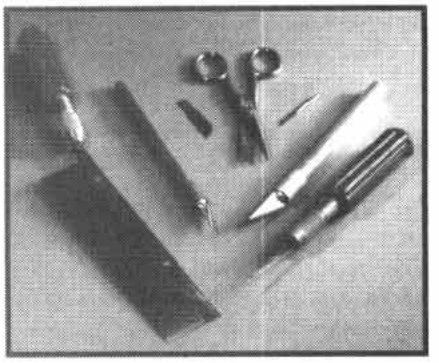
X-Acto also manufactures an extensive line of quality hobby knives which are worth it if you are willing to spend a little more money. Their boxed sets are particularly useful for the modeler and are available in a variety of sizes and contents.

### SMALL SCISSORS:

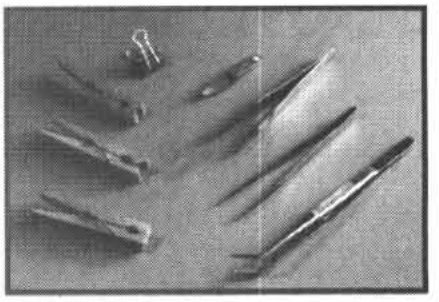
These are used to cut the parts out of the sprue or runner — never twist a part off, you might damage it. Scissors can be found at your local drugstore or in the fashion department (nail scissors do nicely). The drugstore can provide you with many useful items, as we will see.

### TWEEZERS:

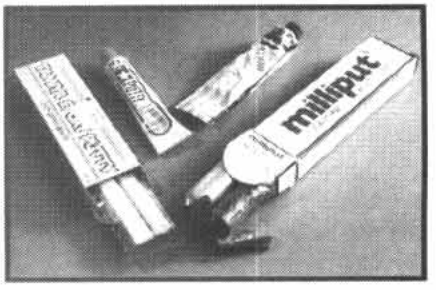
Although the human fingers are quite dexterous, sometimes they are not enough



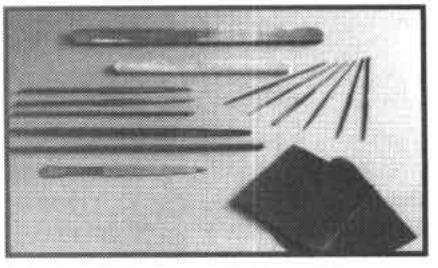
A sample selection of cutting implements, including scissors, hobby knives and blades as well as saws.



Tweezers, clamps, clothespins, even tape can be used to hold parts together while the glue dries.



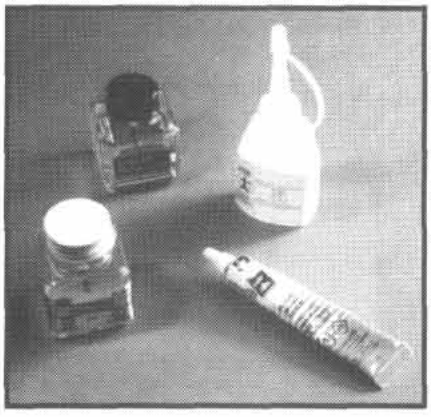

Putty is an essential modeling tool. From left to right: Tamiya Epoxy Putty, Tamiya Model Putty, Squadron Green, and Milliput Epoxy Putty.



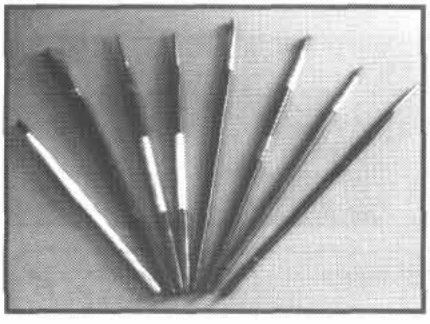
A selection of sanding and polishing tools. Clockwise from lower left: files, emery boards, needle files, and sandpaper sheets.



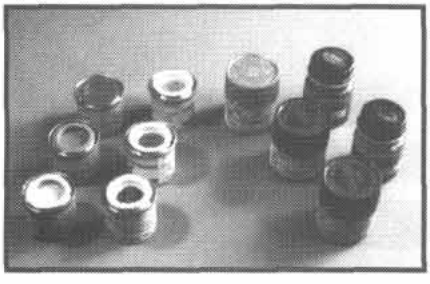
Raymond P Campiglia (Order 33161643)



Model glues. Clockwise from lower left: Testor Liquid Plastic Glue, Humbrol Liquid Glue, Atomic Medium Superglue and Lepage Model Glue.



Assorted paintbrushes from the authors' toolkits.



Paint bottles. From left to right: Humbrol (enamel), Gunze Sanyo (acrylic), and Testor Model Master (enamel). Tamiya's bottles are similar to Gunze Sanyo's, but bigger.

— you may have the impression that your fingers are as big as logs when dealing with small antennae and the like! Tweezers then come in handy, especially to hold parts for painting or gluing. Several sizes are available, and all have some use. We recommend having two pairs: one pair with long, thin ends and another with short, thick ends. Again, check the drugstore or the hobby shop.

## PUTTY:

Not strictly a "tool", putty is just as necessary as a knife. Putty will hide the cracks and defects that make your model appear like a badly assembled toy instead of a stunning replica.

There are many different brands of putty, but the best (in our modest collective opinion) are the Tamiya Model Putty and the Squadron Green Model Putty, both readily available from the hobby store. Some people also have some success with automobile putty, although it tends to "bite" into the plastic — this kind of putty reacts chemically with polystyrene.

The proper use (and misuse) of putty will be explained in a later article.

## SANDPAPER:

You will need sheets of medium, fine and extra-fine grades. That should be enough for a long time, unless you are working on an exceptionally large or ill-fitting model. Always begin with the roughest sandpaper, finishing with the finest. The coarse grades are almost never used, as they scratch the plastic instead of polishing it.

Nail sandpaper files — emery boards — are also useful since they are easier to handle than sandpaper sheets. You can make your own by gluing a strip of sandpaper to a popsicle handle or a strip of cardboard.

## GLUE:

We will assume your first kit to be a plastic one. Polystyrene — the plastic from which models are made — needs a special glue that dissolves the plastic to *weld* it together. Plastic glue exists in two types: tube or liquid. Tube glue is stabilized by the addition of a polymer, making it thicker like syrup, and easier to work with. However, it must be applied with a toothpick and often form filaments which can ruin a model's surface. On the bright side, it is cheap and easily available.

Liquid glue is harder to use but provides better results overall. It must be applied with a paintbrush (generally, one is provided in the lid of the glue jar) — of course, this paintbrush can never again be used for painting, only for applying glue. Be extra careful: liquid glue can and do run, and it dries very quickly. If you drop some on the model, don't touch it! Let it dry then sand the blemish.

If your model is a garage kit, you will need cyanocrylate glue, also known as superglue. The best brands are Zap-A-Gap and Atomic, both of which were specifically designed for modelers. Several grades are available according to the use they are intended for: medium grade is usually best for modeling. Superglue is costly but it works on any surface — including flesh. Exercise caution when using it.

Glue types, their uses and their applications will be covered at length in Part 5.

## PAINTBRUSHES:

These are probably the most expensive pieces of the modeler's toolkit. If chosen well and properly cared for, they will last many years. The best brushes are Grumbacher Sable. You will need a size 8 for large surfaces, size 4 for small ones and a size 0 for details. Smaller brushes are available but the paint tends to dry instantly in them, so it is better to use a size 0 with a fine point.

Never let the paint dry on your brushes. Dip them in the proper diluent after use, and never, ever, let the brushes soak in it: this will only damage the bristles. Carefully dry off the diluent with a soft cloth — don't rub or pull on the bristles — then store them hair up. If the point isn't perfect, get a little saliva on your index and thumb and gently shape the hair back in shape. This should keep your paintbrushes in perfect shape.

Paintbrushes will be covered at length in Part 3.

## PAINTS:

You will need some paints to color your model. Your basic toolkit should include



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the following base colors: black, white, red, green, yellow, blue, and brown. More specialized colors like silver, gold, and flesh (if you intend to add some crewmen figures) can also prove useful.

There are several brands of paint on the market, grouped in three general categories: acrylics, enamels and lacquers. Acrylics are water-based paints that become impervious to water once they dry. The diluent used is water or isopropyl alcohol ("rubbing alcohol"). Acrylics are easy to use and clean easily off brushes, and they have no unpleasant odors. The best brands are Tamiya and Gunze Sanio, while Ral Partha, Polly S and Armory are not too bad either. Gunze Sanio has an "anime" line of color which includes such rarity as "Neo-Jion Purple" and "Nu Gundam Yellow"; unfortunately, they are quite rare and hard to find.

Enamels are much easier to find. Modelers will be familiar with brands like Testor, Testor Model Master and the high-quality Humbrol. Tamiya also produces a limited enamel line. Enamels must be diluted with turpentine or mineral spirit, and they smell awful, requiring a well-ventilated work area. They also reduce the useful life of your paintbrushes.

Lacquers are mostly used for railroad models. The most common brand is Floquil. They attack the plastic and so must be applied by an airbrush, but produce incredibly mat and realistic finish. Unless you are an experienced modeler, lacquers are best left alone.

Paint chemistry and types will be covered at length in Part 3.

### TOOTHPICKS:

These are for applying tube glue, mixing paint and holding up small parts for painting. With time, a myriad of other uses will appear. Get a box at your local supermarket.

### WORK SURFACE:

You must have a work surface. If you do not have access to a dedicated workbench, you should get a flat, smooth board about 2 X 1 1/2 feet in surface. An Arborite or hard wood plank will do just fine. That way, you won't scratch the dining room table and worry about paint sploshes. If you have limited space, the board can be stored vertically; alternatively, screw two "eyes" on one side and hang it on the wall between sessions.

Your work area should always be kept tidy, clean, and well-organized. It is vital that it be well-lighted so that you can see what you are doing! The best light source, bar none, is a Sun-filled window. If a window is not available, make sure that you have plenty of good illumination that is comfortable to your eyes.

## OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

### NEEDLE FILES:

Files can be more useful than sandpaper when dealing with large quantities of material to remove, or special shapes to clean up. Miniature file sets, also called needle files, are commonly available in hobby and hardware stores. They usually contain a small square file, a flat file and a round file. Triangular files are also good to have.

### SAWS:

X-Acto produces a line of small modeling saws which fit in a standard X-Acto knife handle. The best set comes with two saws: one with medium teeth and the other with small teeth. Jeweler's saws are also useful, though they are harder to find and break more easily. Modeling hacksaws also exist and are very useful when doing modifications and kitbashing.

### DRILL BITS:

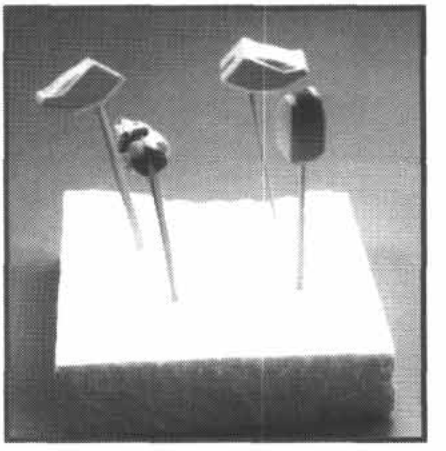
These are useful in drilling out gun barrels and other details molded closed in the kit. You should have two or three different-sized bits. Special handles are usually sold with the bits themselves, for they are too small to be used with a powered drill. Both items can be found in hobby or hardware shops.

### CLAMPS:

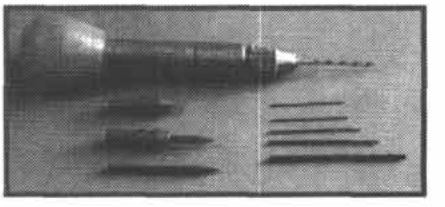
Clamps are for holding parts while the glue dries, or for painting. X-Acto makes some very good ones, but they are expensive. You could also use paper clamps, or even clothspins. The best clamps are often the improvised ones, after all.

### PLIERS:

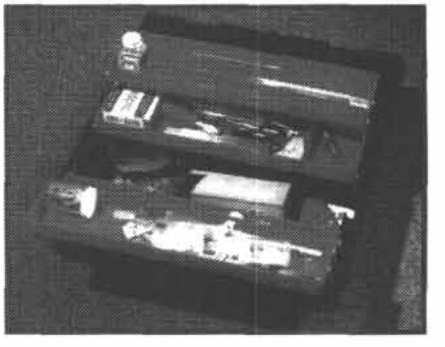
A few small pliers can be very useful to hold parts for painting or for working with



Styrofoam and toothpicks can work wonders at the drying stages of the construction and painting.



A typical pin vise with drill bit assortment. The smallest drill is barely 1/64 of an inch wide!



Marc's main toolbox. Note toothpick box, liquid glue bottle and categorized tools.

Dominique's small field toolkit, perfect for carrying to conventions.



Raymond P. Campiglia (Order # 33181643)

metal pieces, especially metal miniatures'.

## PIPE CLEANERS:

Those can be used in many ways. They mostly serve to hold parts that cannot be easily clamped, or clean hard to reach spots on the model.

## STYROFOAM BLOC:

The styrofoam bloc is useful for holding small parts when used in conjunction with the toothpicks (see picture). Smaller blocs can also serve as sanding blocs when wrapped with sandpaper.

## MOTOR TOOL:

Motor tools are basically fast, powerful drill which can be equipped with a variety of bits ranging from miniature disc saws to buffing wheels to our personal favorite, the grinder. Although motor tools require extreme caution and are fairly expensive (around $90), they do help greatly in kitbashing and scratchbuilding. Dremel and Motorcraft are two of the best known names.

## AIRBRUSH:

The airbrush is a miniature, high precision spray gun that allows a brushstroke-free surface on your model as well as a plethora of special effects. Many modelers consider the airbrush the mark of a serious hobbyist, but some of our team members (Martin and Dominique) practically never use it and still turn out stunning replicas.

Airbrushes require a big initial investment (the tool itself, a compressor, accessories, etc.), but once you've started using it you'll wonder how you ever modeled without it! A good start is the inexpensive Badger 350 (aroun $30) which uses compressed air cylinders instead of a compressor.

Airbrushes and their use will be covered in an upcoming article.

## TOOLBOX:

Modeling tools can be kept in drawers or old kit boxes, but it is better to have a dedicated toolbox. A fishing tackle, with multiple drawers and storage compartments, is perfect to store all your tools. You may also want to have a smaller, simpler version to carry around and repair your models exposed in conventions and expositions.

## BITBOX:

The bitbox is a simple box where you place old models that you don't want anymore, broken pieces, or parts that you didn't use when building your latest kit. Along with a couple of styrene sheets and tubes of various thickness and diameters, the bitbox will become your best ally when modifying or reparing a model.

Whenever you find something that you think might be useful to detail a model, put it in your bitbox. Be careful, however, not to keep too much junk!

# SAFETY FIRST

When talking about tools one must talk about safety. Remember that any tool capable of cutting through plastic and metal is doubly capable of cutting through flesh!

When using a cutting tool, make sure the blade is sharp and cut away from yourself to avoid accidents. A dull blade will be harder to control and require more pressure to cut, increasing the chances of slippage and injuries.

Also, don't forget that many of the paints and glues we use have strong chemical contents. Do not breathe the fumes and work in a well-ventilated area.

In short, read the safety instructions, and above all, stick to them!

# CONCLUSION

The tools listed above are the basics. More advanced tools such as the motor tool and the airbrush will have articles dedicated to them since they require special techniques to be used properly. In the meantime, one can build some quite good models with the tools listed above.

The next installment of *The Basics of Mecha Modeling* will examine paints, paintbrushes and decals. Stay tuned!

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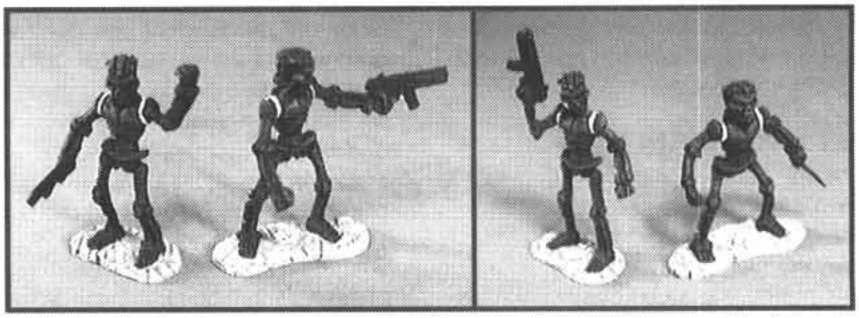
# HEAVY ARMOR

**By the Dream Pod 9 Modeling Team**

HEAVY ARMOR is a regular feature that takes a look at some of the miniatures available on the market for mechanized science-fiction gamers and modelers. Thus, while mecha and powersuits are often reviewed, don't be surprised to see a tank or a fighter once in a while.

The reviews are mostly centered on the molding and general appearance of the miniature as it comes out of its package. Whenever possible, accuracy is checked against the gaming illustration which served as template. Other review criteria include molding quality, details and so forth.

NAME: Coalition Skelebots Pack #1
MANUFACTURER: Palladium Books® w/Rafm Company, Inc.
KIT NUMBER: 8008
MATERIAL: non-lead metal alloy



The Rifts™ universe has been a huge success amonst sci-fi fans, probably because of the multitude of weird and wonderful designs contained within. Shaped like extras from the movie Terminator 2, the Skelebots are infantry robots used by the Coalition.

The package contains four Skelebots, each in a different pose. Depending on the model's posture, one or both arms are molded separately to ensure that the details would come out well.

The pieces are reasonably free of flash and mold lines: nothing that can't be removed easily by a judicious application of files and sandpaper. The thin limbs of the Skelebots make them perfect candidate for posture modification, so no two Skelebots need ever look the same. We recommend, however, that you bend the parts very slowly before assembly, so as not to damage the model.

Despite the small contact surfaces, the arms were glued on without any problem, although we did have to remove the locator pins to facilitate the operation. The models, after a primer coat, were painted very dark blue and highlighted with medium blue. The guns were painted black and the ID number and bands on the chest are pure white.

NAME: SMT-12 Moray
MANUFACTURER: Rafm Company, Inc.
KIT NUMBER: 1019
MATERIAL: pewter

The last machine introduced in the **Mekton Techbook**, the Moray is a transformable submarine mekton designed by the inhabitants of the Archipelagos. Of course, since the transformation feature had to be dropped from the model (!), the Moray is presented in its humanoid configuration.

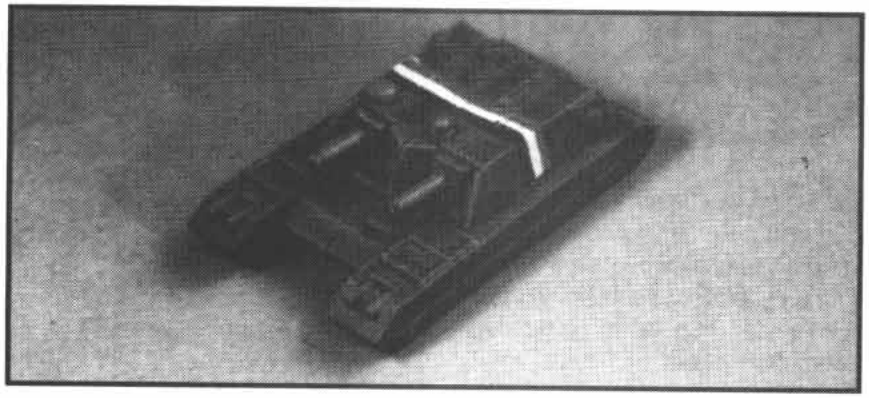
The kit is composed of five pieces: the mekton itself, right arm/beam gun, tail unit, and two manta-like wings. The mounting pins on the right arm and the tail unit caused some fit problems, but these were quickly eliminated with a sharp X-Acto blade as we resculpted the pins to fit correctly. The gun was troublesome because of its size and had to be glued to the body of the Mekton to ensure a solid bond.

There were some heavy mold lines on the manta wings and the tail unit, but "scrapping" with an X-Acto blade helped get rid of most of the problem. Other than that, the model posed no major problem for clean-up.

A standard Rafm hex base was used to stabilize the miniature. The awkward tail unit had to be bent to ensure a proper posture. It will also help when storing the model!

Raymond P Campiglia (Order 3316648)

NAME: Paneuropean Superheavy Tank
MANUFACTURER: Ral Partha
KIT NUMBER: 93-031
MATERIAL: Ralidium™

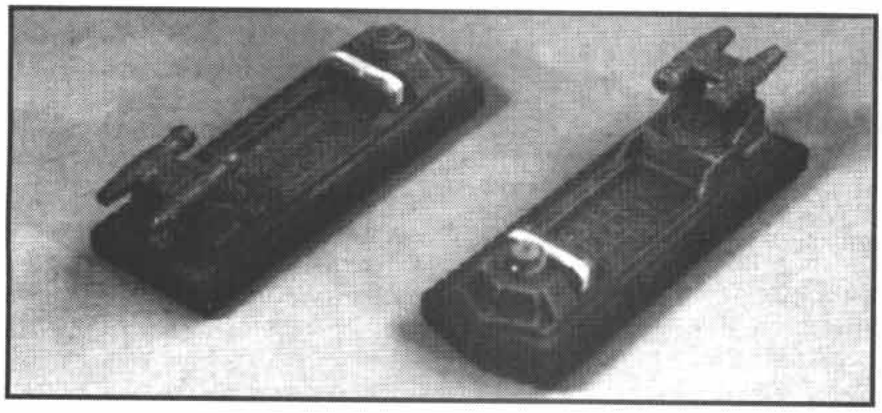


The Superheavy Tank is just one step short of **OGRE**'s monstrous cybertanks. It is equipped with two powerful main railguns that can easily tear any smaller vehicle to shreds. The kit could also represent an advanced version of a Demolisher battle tank from FASA's **Battletech**.

The miniature is made of five parts: main hull, two tread units and two guns. There were no flash or mold line present except on the sides of the tread units, where they are easy to remove with a small file. Assembly caused no problem, although the guns do have to be supported while drying.

The model is ideally suited to the "wash and drybrush" painting technique, since it has many well-engraved hull details.

NAME: Paneuropean GEV-PC
MANUFACTURER: Ral Partha
KIT NUMBER: 93-032
MATERIAL: Ralidium™



The GEV-PCs are large, flat-decked hovercrafts designed to carry supplies and infantry squads rapidly over long distances. This kit includes two hovercrafts per package.

Each vehicle is made of two parts: the hovercraft itself and a twin booster engine pack which must be glued at the rear of the model. Although the mounting pins are rather small, the engine fitted with no problem. A mold line runs around the ground-effect skirt, but it is easy to remove using files or sandpaper. Alternatively, it could be left in place to represent a skirt separation line.

The vehicles are well-detailed for their small size and look extremely good when washed and drybrushed. They can be used in a variety of science-fiction universes since their design is clean and simple.

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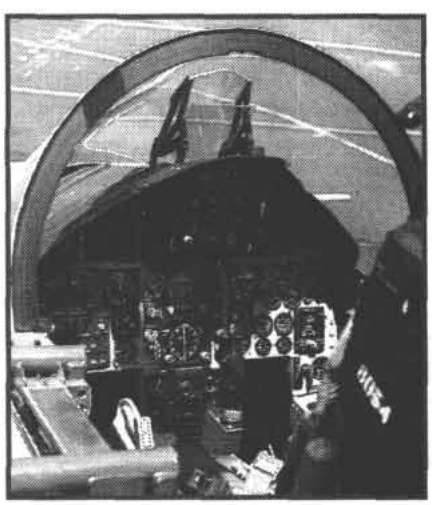
# COCKPIT SYSTEMS

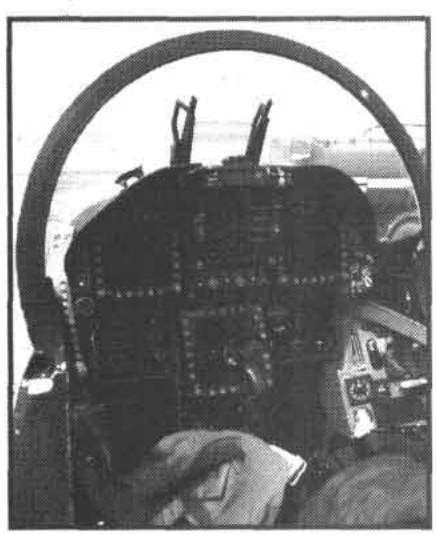
**by Dominique Durocher, jr. eng.**

This installment covers cockpit command systems, or specifically the man-machine interface. This interface comprises two parts: displays, to supply information to the pilot; and controls to direct the machine's actions. These systems evolved from their nearest counterparts, those which required vast amounts of information covering all directions and many systems: combat aircraft.



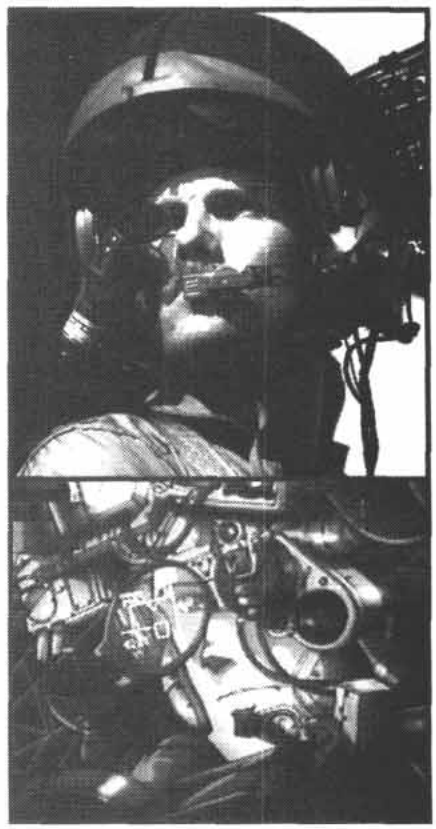
## THE FIRST CENTURY

For almost as long as they have existed, aircraft have used the same basic controls. There are two hand controllers: the stick, usually jutting up between the pilot's knees, which controls both the pitch (nose up/down) and roll (clockwise/counter-clockwise) of the craft, and the throttle, for engine thrust. There are also a set of pedals to control yaw (nose left/right) as well as wheel brakes. For more than half a century, these were simply connected to control surfaces by wires. They were then augmented with hydraulic actuators when the control loads became too great for a man to manually move. These systems were then replaced with electrical controls (first analog, then digital), which was known as fly-by-wire. The last evolution, first appearing in the late 1980's in prototype form, was fly-by-light, using fiber optic conduits to transmit commands from the cockpit to the actuators. Throughout all this, the basic configuration of the stick-and-throttle changed very little, with only the stick being moved from the center to the right side of the seat.



The evolution of aircraft cockpits from the complex (F-15, left) to the simpler MFD equipped panel (F-18, above). Both also show their HUDs.

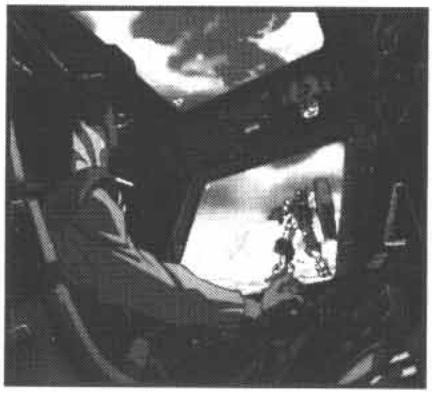
The displays are where the most evolution has occurred. In the beginning, they basically consisted of a few gauges, which became more numerous as the aircraft did. These arrays of gauges became too complex for a pilot to monitor during flight, much less combat, so a new solution was devised. The first designed from the outset with a Heads-up-Display, or HUD, was on the SAAB Viggen (this system had been retro-fitted to other types slighrly earlier), first flown in 1967. A development of reflector gunsights used as early as W.W.II, this incorporated flight and navigational data, allowing the pilot to fly without having to look down inside the cockpit, therefore maintaining a better awareness of what was around him. Then followed another important development: the Cathode Ray Tube (or CRT), also known as a TV screen. CRTs had been present in aircraft for about twenty years, but only as radar screens. The F-18 was the first aircraft to use them for navigational and systems monitoring use, quickly followed by other military aircraft as well as Airbus and Boeing (for starters) commercial transports. The next step was to move the HUD to the pilot's helmet, allowing not only constant access to systems data, but also targeting simply by looking at the target. The AH-64 Apache was the first aircraft to use this system, controlling it's cannon, followed by the MiG-29, where it was linked to the infrared sensor in front of the cockpit. For aircraft of the following generation, helmet mounted displays would become standard issue, and even incorporate stereoscopic imaging, allowing flight in total darkness with the pilot still able to perceive distances.



The Helmet Display Unit (HDU) of the Apache, and a similar system in the Madox.

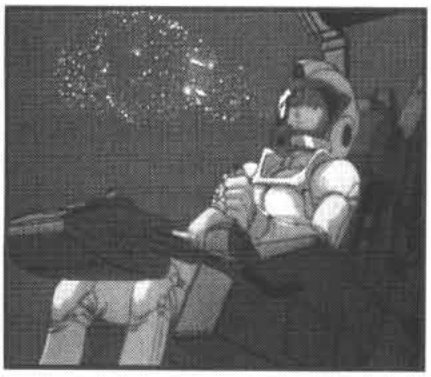


Raymond P. Campiglio (Order # 3316148)

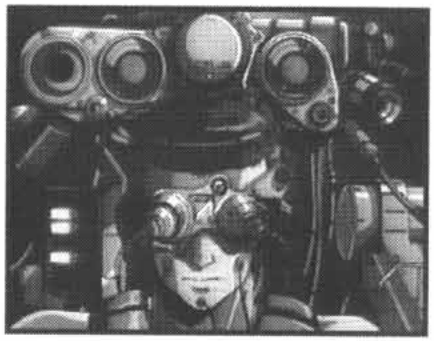


## WHAT CAME NEXT

For mecha, these systems were not quite sufficient. On some primitive designs, those which still retained open viewports, such systems could be sufficient, but would also eventually become obsolete with the advent of the completely enclosed cockpit, which would give better protection to the pilot. The first configuration used was a simple extension of that which was already in use. Screens were added to the interior panels of the cockpit, simulating the presence of the usual clear panes. This avoided unfamiliarity from the pilot, making the conversion to such types easier. This system was also simple, not requiring anything more than orienting a sensor toward where the viewport would allow one to see. This array of screens also allowed secondary flight, navigational and communications data to be displayed on these same



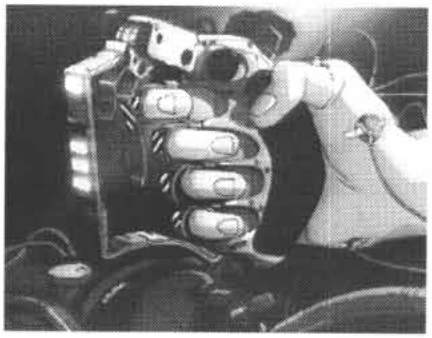
Examples of an early, flat-screen cockpit (top), and a sherical enclosed linear seat (above). What looks like windows in the top picture is in fact high-definition screens linked to the mobile suit's external sensors. Note that the linear seat does not have anything to block the pilot's view.



screens, thereby reducing the loading of the control panel facing the pilot. It also allowed for the enhancement of the visual data acquired from the sensors, allowing for better sighting conditions for the pilot, no matter what the actual exterior conditions were. The main drawback of this method is that it still limited the view a pilot could have of his environment. Valkyries and early models of GM and Zaku used this cockpit arrangement.

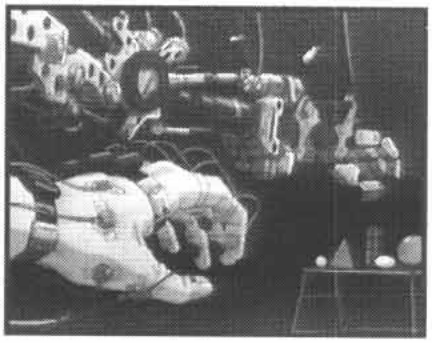
Later would come the fully spherical cockpit, with screens forming a ball completely encompassing the pilot, giving him a view of all the surrounding volume, without interference from the body of the mecha itself. This considerably improved pilot awareness, making for better survivability in combat. This sort of arrangement is seen in the linear seat of Gundam.

The next step would be the complete elimination of all viewscreens through the use of virtual reality helmets. Although the first were developed for military use in the mid-1980's, they were not really used until considerably later. These helmets would contain two screens with stereoscopic images covering the pilot's entire field of view. The view would change to follow the movements of his head, giving the user the greatest freedom for looking around. The earliest known use was in the Type J-9 Griffon prototype and the Type-0 patrol labor. Other than these, very little use was made of them. It would seem that the system was too complex to be easily incorporated into a combat machine, where the complexity of the feedback for the helmer's position, as well as it's usual bulk, made it's use inefficient.



## EVOLVING CONTROLS

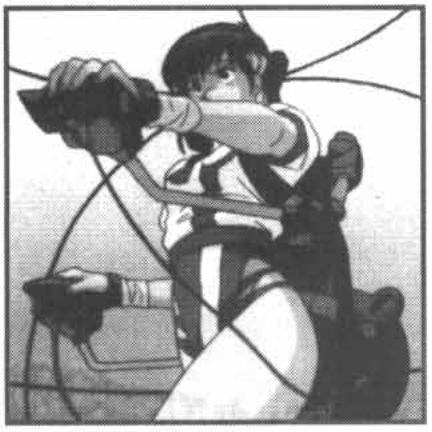
Throughout most of this, the command input methods remained relatively unchanged. Although movement controls (throttle) were usually transferred to the pedals and the left stick becoming another directional control rather than propulsion, the control configuration was still familiar. The only modification to this was the occasional replacement of the stick by a control some would call a spaceball. It is a sphere, similar to a track ball, but it does not move. It's surface is studded with pressure transducers which allow it to determine what movement the pilot is inputting. It can read not only a translational input along all three axes, but also rotations, allowing a single control to supply all attitude information for the movement of a craft. A second control could then be used for targeting independently from movement.



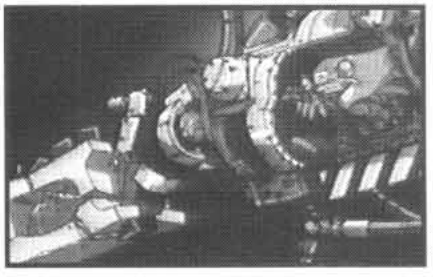
The first sign of real change came with the additional waldos on many labors. These were hand controls added to the pilot's seat, just behind the sticks, in which each finger would individually control one of it's counterparts on the mecha. This was the only way to transfer the delicateness of a human's touch to the



Raymond P Campiglio (Order 33161648)



machine, something which was required by the precision of their construction work, and not by purely military machines. This was later extended to incorporate full arm movement and ,eventually, that of the entire body. In the latter case, and when combined with either a VR helmet, a spherical display or holographic projections, the pilot would "become" the mecha, which would then mimic every movement the pilot made, exactly. This, of course, made for the most agile machines, but at the cost of complexity, and to some point reliability, as well as ease of use of some secondary functions. In these cases, vocal controls became more than mere secondary "gadgets", as the pilot could not push a button without the mecha doing the same. This lead to the long stereotyped yelling out of attacks during combat. Such a system was used in the Gunbuster machines and Jovian exo-armors.



This method is also usually used for smaller powersuits, since they do not have the space for a full cockpit. Some, like the Madox, are not even fully enclosed! Most of these have the pilot's limbs within those of the mecha, except the Appleseed Guges, which uses "limblers". In these cases, the pilot does not actually pilot, but wear the mecha. When the

pilot moves, he applies pressure to the wall of the compartment, which is picked up by transducers and the mecha moves in order to alleviate this pressure, therefore mimicking the pilot's motion. This is a reverse feedback system that was first described in 1959 in the novel Starship Troopers. This seems to be the most efficient way to go for smaller suits, as the pilot does not need to worry about any aspect of piloting, just doing his job.

## PILOTING A MECHA

One element that seems to escape most, often even the mechanical designers, is that in most cases, the right hand does not control the movements of the mecha's right hand, the right pedal does not control the right foot, and so on. Most of the movement routines are preprogrammed, and a function of the initial position of a limb, the machine's balance, the presence of any objects obstructing the movement, etc. The controller merely indicates what the pilot wants: movement in a certain direction or aim such weapon in that direction. The flight computer then generates any necessary limb movements or thrust vectors, and then activates the appropriate actuators and verniers to accomplish the desired result. The pedals can be used to indicate movement forward or rearward, as well as speed or turns, while the hand controllers will be used for targeting only (such as in Patlabor). Others prefer to use one hand controller for direction control, the other for targeting, and the pedals for speed ( as in Gundam). This is more a matter of preference on the part of the designer and the pilots. The fact is that how the controls is are inputted is not important, as long as the pilot can feel they are natural and not send the wrong commands by mistake. However they reach it, the computer does not see a difference and will treat them in the same manner. The exception to this is, of course, direct slaving because, as mentioned above, it involves the exact mimicking of the pilot's movements.

The ultimate control system would be direct cerebral feed to the computer. Considering the complexity of the brain and the difficulty in mapping the various necessary impulses, it is unlikely that such a control system will be available for a very long time. It is possible, though, that other civilizations may have achieved the technical knowledge to do so. This seems to have been the case in Southern Cross, where the <<Bioroids>> were under mental control. Some universes have had limited control, using a neural interface to provide "reflex" input, such as balance, to the mecha. But there has generally not been any truly mentally controlled mecha.

## WHERE ARE WE HEADED

As we have seen, although the appearance of control systems may seem quite different, they are all basically similar in that they merely translate the pilot's wishes into a form the control systems can understand. All movement in a mecha is under mostly automatic control, with the pilot being the overseeing member of a committee of computers in deciding what the mecha will do. The input devices have changed, the displays have evolved, but their essential function has remained the same throughout, only changing in efficiency, and this according to the requirements of each machine.

Raymond P Campiglia (Order 33161643)

# JOVIAN CHRONICLES

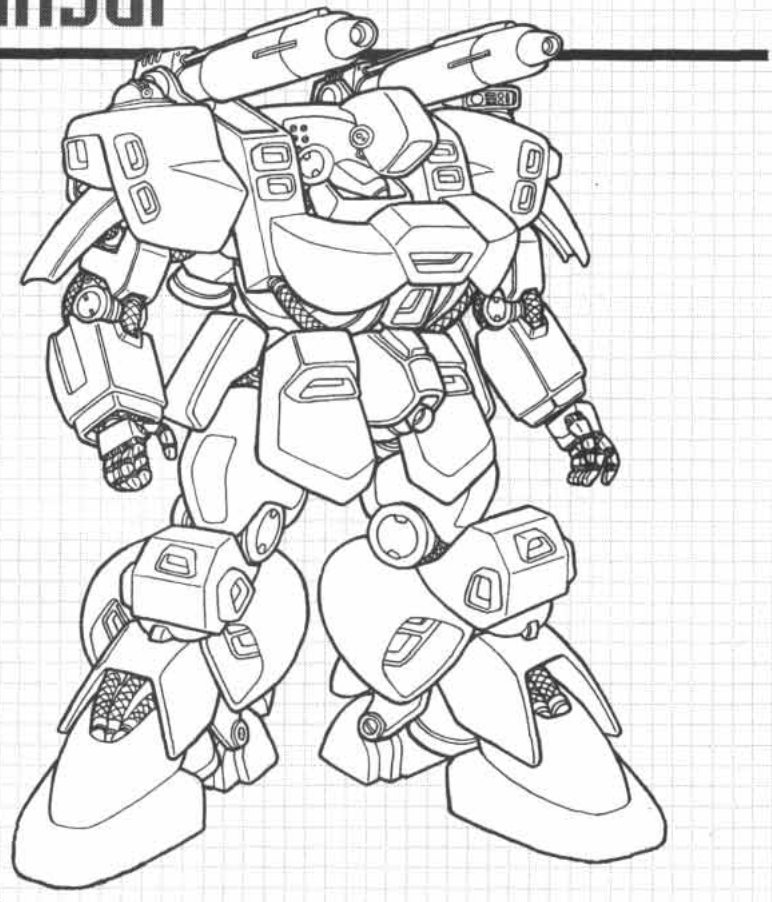
## EAT-LRS-02
# SENSEI

**By Marc-Alex Vézina**

The Sensei is a modified version of the venerable and sturdy Mentor training exo-armor. JAF pilots are fond of the Mentor, which they describe as a joy to pilot, so it was only logical that it should be chosen as base for a new close support vehicle.

Since the Mentor is not a very fast design, the jovian engineers beefed up the armor to absorb any hit the machine could not evade in combat. The Mentor's armament was upgraded to twin shoulder-mounted particle cannons, both long-ranged and very accurate. The left anti-missile system was replaced by the necessary target acquisition gear. Both plasma lances were left in place, more for convenience than actual necessity since the Sensei is not intended to engage in close combat.

Thirty Senseis have been built up to now. Ten are assigned to each Division, although Alpha Division is slated to receive five more as soon as Jovian Armor Works can finish them.



**Name:** EAT-LRS-02
**Tonnage:** 38.5
**Pilot Name:** various

**Ground MA:** 6
**Flight MA:** 15
**Maneuver Value:** -5

**Actions Bonus:** 0
**Scale:** 1/1
**CPs:** 137

### COMPONENTS

| Servo Location | Level | Kills | Armor | Type | SP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | S | 6 | MS | S | 4 |
| Head | SL | 1 | S | S | 3 |
| R&L. Arms | SL | 2 | S | S | 3 |
| R&L. Legs | LW | 3 | S | S | 3 |
| - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Powerplant | s | 6 | - | Cold | - |
| Hydraulics | - | 8 | - | Standard | - |

### EQUIPMENT

| Name | Kills | Game effects |
|---|---|---|
| 2nd Cockpit | K | Gunner Cockpit |
| 2x Escape Pod | 2 | Last Chance! |
| Space Protection | - | Fine-tune unit for space use |
| Res. Inten. (x10) | - | LA, Target Acquisition |
| - | - | - |
| - | - | - |
| - | - | - |

### WEAPONS

| Name | WA | Range | Kills/Dam | Shots | Loc | Special |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Particle Cannon | +1 | 15 | 4/4 | Inf. | T | |
| Particle Cannon | +1 | 15 | 4/4 | Inf. | T | |
| Plasma Lance | +1 | Melee | 2/6 | 3 | L. Hand | |
| Plasma Lance | +1 | Melee | 2/6 | 3 | R. Hand | |
| AM Turret | +1 | N/A | 1/(3) | Inf. | RA | AM Only, Fragile |
| Left Hand | +1 | Melee | 1/1 | - | LA | Quick, Handy |
| Right Hand | +1 | Melee | 1/1 | - | RA | Quick, Handy |

### SENSORS

| Type | Kills | Range | Comm | Loc |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Main | 6 | 11 Km | 1300 Km | H |

### WEAPON COST

| Weapons | CPs |
|---|---|
| Particle Cannon | 14.5 |
| Plasma Lance | 2 |
| AM Turret | 3 |

* This design uses the Jovian Chronicles optional rules.



Raymond P Campiglio (Order - 33181648)

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Raymond P Campiglio (Order # 33161643)

# LOST: A BATTLETECH STORY

**By Jake Brenner**

"Where the hell are they?!" Mechwarrior Evan Mitchell was starting to loose both his patience and courage. To get lost on his first combat drop! Bad luck had always seemed to hang about him, and now it started to look like it could kill him.

His 20-ton *Cannon* pushed its way through the trees. Evan had been assigned to the small 'Mech barely two months ago, just enough time to make sure he would not make it trip over its own feet. He was then sent, along with a dozen of other apprehensive cadets, to help defend the frontier against Clan raiders. He was presently in a dense forest, probably tens of kilometers from the rest of his lance. They would not be looking for him, of course: they were too busy dealing with the Clan machines dropping from the sky like heavy rain.

The *Cannon*'s radar screen did not register any 'Mech in the close vicinity, but Evan knew better than to thrust his machine's artificial senses. A Clan Omnimech could be hiding just behind that boulder with a Guardian — or even worse, an Angel — ECM suite turned on at full power, and he'd walk right in front of it. The thought made him shudder slightly. The *Cannon* seemed to hesitate, then resumed its walk.

* * *

Ten hours later, he was no closer to anyone. The gently rolling mountains he had entered three hours ago were marked on his map as bordering the assigned sector of Finnigan's Lance, but there were no signs of them. He dared not broadcast for help for fear of pointing out his position to would-be Clan listeners. Evan sighted and turned his attention back to the front viewscreen. Exhaustion blurred his vision: he had been sitting in the command couch for sixteen hours straight, and his body rebelled at the thought of spending more time in the overheated cockpit. He had opened the external hatch for ventilation, but the tiny opening barely helped maintain the temperature at an almost normal level.

Evan eased the *Cannon* down beside a rock boulder. He was tired, but his training took over and he carefully checked and turned off every system, keeping the fusion engine at idle. He had almost turned it off when he remembered that he would have no way of starting it up again without another energy source. Reaching under the seat, he pulled out a light package containing an emergency survival kit.

He fully opened the cockpit and inhaled a deep breath of fresh evening air. There was a deep, pleasant smell of vegetation which seemed like heaven to the young pilot; he had just spent weeks aboard an overcrowded dropship, breathing recycled, smelly air.

The dim K8 sun had already disappeared behind the tree top, leaving just enough light for him to slowly pick his way down the 'mech, avoiding the heatsinks carefully. The Cannon was sitting at the base of a small rock outcropping, its large metal legs forming solid armored walls around him. Evan thought about lighting a fire, but decided against it.

He ate his ration pack cold, in silence. His simple outfit helped support the fiendish heat of a Battlemech cockpit, but now it was only exposing Evan's flesh to the cold wind that blew between the trees. Evan shivered and reached into the survival pack, fumbling in the dark for his isolated coverall. He was putting them on when a sharp crack behind him made him dive for his laser pistol. He fell on the ground heavily, hampered by the half-drawn coverall, and fumbled to reach the weapon and his flashlight. He spun to align both with the sound.

It was a young girl, unconscious.

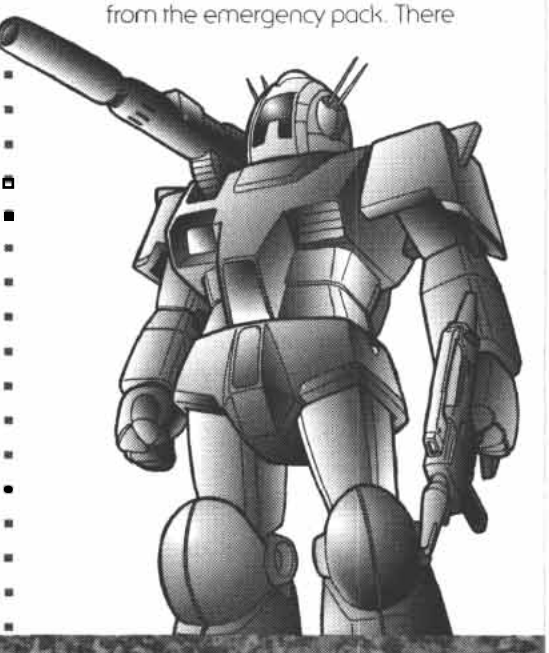
Evan approached her cautiously, illuminating her with the flashlight and keeping the gun centered on her head. Her short blond hair was a mess, and her coverall was torn and dirty, as if she had just spent weeks walking through the forest. The gun clip on her belt was empty. Underneath the coverall she wore a cooling suit of advanced design, as if the green bird marking on her left breast pocket was not enough to identify her as a Clan warrior.

* * *

Evan thought furiously. What was a Clan warrior doing this far out from the main drop site? Were the Clans attacking from another front? The questions rushed through his head, most of them unanswered. The girl was still unconscious — no, sleeping. He had tried to rouse her, but without much success. "She must be exhausted", he mumbled to himself.

He didn't know what to do. He could not take her with him, for she would never fit in the *Cannon*'s small cockpit, nor would he feel very safe with a born and bred warrior just behind his seat — conscious or not. He could carry her in the 'mech's hands, but if he should ever find himself drawn into a battle...

He yawned, suddenly conscious of how tired he was. He took another stimulant from the emergency pack. There





Raymond P Campiglia (Order : 33181648)

was no way out, he would have to take her back to base. If only he could figure out where that was...

Evan hastily gathered his things and climbed back aboard the *Cannon*. He settled down in the couch but left the hatch open. The 'mech straightened and got to its feet. Evan carefully scooped up the sleeping form with the machine's right hand, then chose a direction at random. He would have activated his compass, but the magnetic monopoles in the ground would make such an operation practically useless.

The *Cannon* had barely covered a kilometer when he happened upon a small clearing in the wood. A Clan *Uller* was sitting there with its hatch open; startled, Evan almost opened up with the torso-mounted large laser when he remembered the girl's presence in his 'mech hand. Beside, the Clan machine was obviously shutdown and no threat to him. Evan surmised that it belonged to the young girl. Other than the green bird marking of the attacking Jade Falcons and some ID numbers high on the left and right torso, the greenish color pattern was unbroken. Even the tip of the right arm autocannon was unsoiled. "But why did she abandon it?" There was no visible damage on its camoflaged alloy hull, although internal mechanical problems would not be visible.

He toyed with the idea of dismounting and checking it out, but decided against it. The Starmates of the *Uller* girl could be in the region, and Evan had no taste for one-against-four odds, Rules of Engagement or not. If only he knew where he was! The nav beacon would be useless, of course. It would have been disconnected to prevent the invaders from using it. The situation was not good, and Evan felt more tired than ever. He made a note of the approximate position of the "wreck" on his notepad. This is a mystery better left to others, he thought, and he continued past the unmoving war machine.

* * *

Evan had stopped to take a short nap, as he felt increasingly exhausted. Although he had programmed the computer to wake him up after three hours, he found that he had been sleeping for nearly twelve standard hours. He shook his head to clear it of the last fogs of sleep and found he could not. The girl was still sleeping.

Evan maneuvered the *Cannon* back into the small trail he had found earlier. He was now sure he could find his way out. The nav beacon was still silent, though, and that worried him. Had the entire garrison been wiped out to the last man, or was the battle still raging? A raid did not usually last this long. And why was he still sleepy?

The trees ahead thinned somewhat, and some light shone through the foliage. The end of the forest! At last, cried Evan, and he rushed through the gap.

To find himself in front of the *Uller*.

It had not moved, nor changed. It was still staring right ahead through its great sensor eye as if it was a cyclop told to wait for its master without making a sound. Evan strangled a cry of despair and gave up. Let them find him, it should be simpler than the other way around. If he waited here, he doubled his chances: the Clans would surely come looking for the girl.

Heaven, was he tired.

* * *

"The 28th Rangers have been decimated, Colonel. That victory costs us dearly," said the young lieutenant. He had just been assigned to the garrison and could still see the men and women of the place as mere statistics.

Colonel Mayer wished he could do the same. But he had worked with these people for months now, even the youngs who came just a few weeks ago. He made a point of knowing each and everyone of them, and he felt their loss deeply.

"What about the newcomers? The 25th, I believe?" They had been assigned to the left wing, a place where attack was unlikely.

"All dead, Colonel. I'm afraid that the unexpected Clan offensive on that flank took us by surprise. Wait." He punched a couple of keys on his tablet. "There is one 'mech listed as MIA: a mechwarrior Mitchell, I believe."

"Mitchell". Mayer remembered the unlucky young man. "What happened to him?"

"He probably got lost in the nearby forest. We have reports that he was followed by a Clan light 'mech, so he was probably killed along with the others. Unlucky to the end, heh?" Even the lieutenant had heard of Evan Mitchell's bad luck.

Mayer turned and smiled. "I think not, lieutenant. He turned back to the map. "Do you know how this forest is called, lieutenant?"

"I'm afraid not, sir. I know the sector's ID number, but the local name escaped me."

"They call it the 'Forest of Peaceful Rest'. Has something to do with the local biochemistry, I'm told: you just get sleepy and doze off." Mayer sat down at his desk. "The compound is present in minute quantities and not dangerous at all, so the 'mech's filters let it pass in the cockpit aeration system. That's why the forest is normally off limits."

"So Mitchell is..."

"Yes, probably sleeping in some clearing along with a Clan warrior. Why don't you take some men in sealed suits and go look for him?"

"Yes sir! On our way." The lieutenant started to leave, but stopped at the door. "Forest of Peaceful Rest, huh?"

Mayer nodded. He sat back and grabbed his pipe. "I think that for once, just once, Mitchell got lucky."



Raymond P Campiglio (Order 3318648)

# TECHNICAL READOUT

## GAL-2DSM CANNON

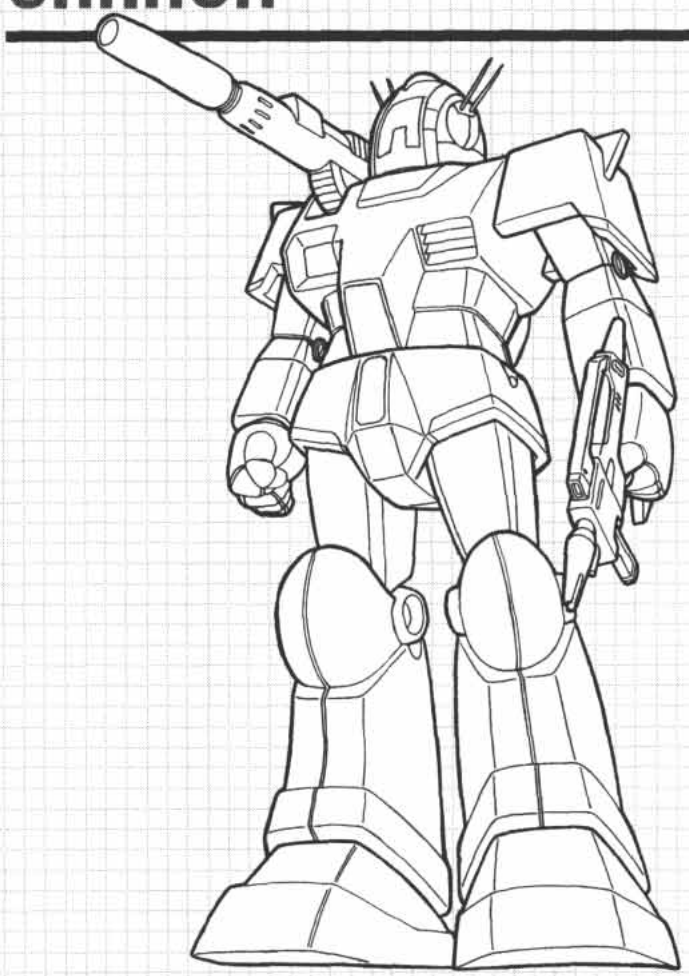
**By Jake Brenner**

The multiple successes of the new Gallowglas Battlemech prompted Blackwell to begin a study on the possibility of using the design as base for a line of new 'Mechs. The Cannon is the first of these new experimental machines.

The GAL-2DSM (for Down-Sized Model) is a scaled-down version of the Gallowglas. Like its larger brethren, it is equipped solely with energy weapons, eliminating any dependency on ammunition; an Endo-Steel skeleton, to save weight; and a standard engine, to increase battlefield survival and reduce construction cost.

The main punch of the Cannon, and the source of its name, is the torso-mounted Sunbeam large laser. Although this extended range model generates a lot of heat (more, in fact, than the heat sinks can normally handle), it does provide an excellent punch for so light a design.

Unfortunately, the Cannon also suffers from some deficiencies. The choice of standard heat sinks instead of the double strength models reduces the machine's endurance, while the absence of jumpjets is a major shortcoming. However, these flaws may be corrected by use of Clan-level technology, which Blackwell is reported to have.



## TECHNICAL READOUT

**Mass:** 20 Tons
**Chassis:** BLKWL-152dsm
**Power Plant:** GM 120
**Cruising Speed:** 63.2 kph
**Maximum Speed:** 94 kph
**Jump Jets:** None
**Jump Capacity:** N/A
**Armor:** Durallex Light
**Armament:**
1 DO Sunbeam ER Large Laser
1 Magna Mk II Medium Laser
**Manufacturer:**
Blackwell Heavy Industries
**Communication System:**
Dalban Micrtonics
**Targeting and Tracking System:**
Dalban HiRez II

**TYPE: GAL-2DSM Cannon**

| Equipment: | | | Mass |
|---|---|---|---|
| Internal Structure (ES): | | | 1 |
| Engine: | 120 | | 9.5 |
| Walk: | 6 | | |
| Run: | 9 | | |
| Jump: | 0 | | |
| Heat Sinks: | 11 | | 1 |
| Gyro: | | | 3 |
| Cockpit: | | | 3 |
| Armor Factor: | 54 (FF) | | 3 |
| | Internal Structure | Armor Value | |
| Head: | 3 | 6 | |
| Center Torso: | 6 | 8/4 | |
| Rt./Lt. Torso: | 5 | 6/2 | |
| Rt./Lt. Arm: | 3 | 4 | |
| Rt./Lt. Leg: | 4 | 6 | |

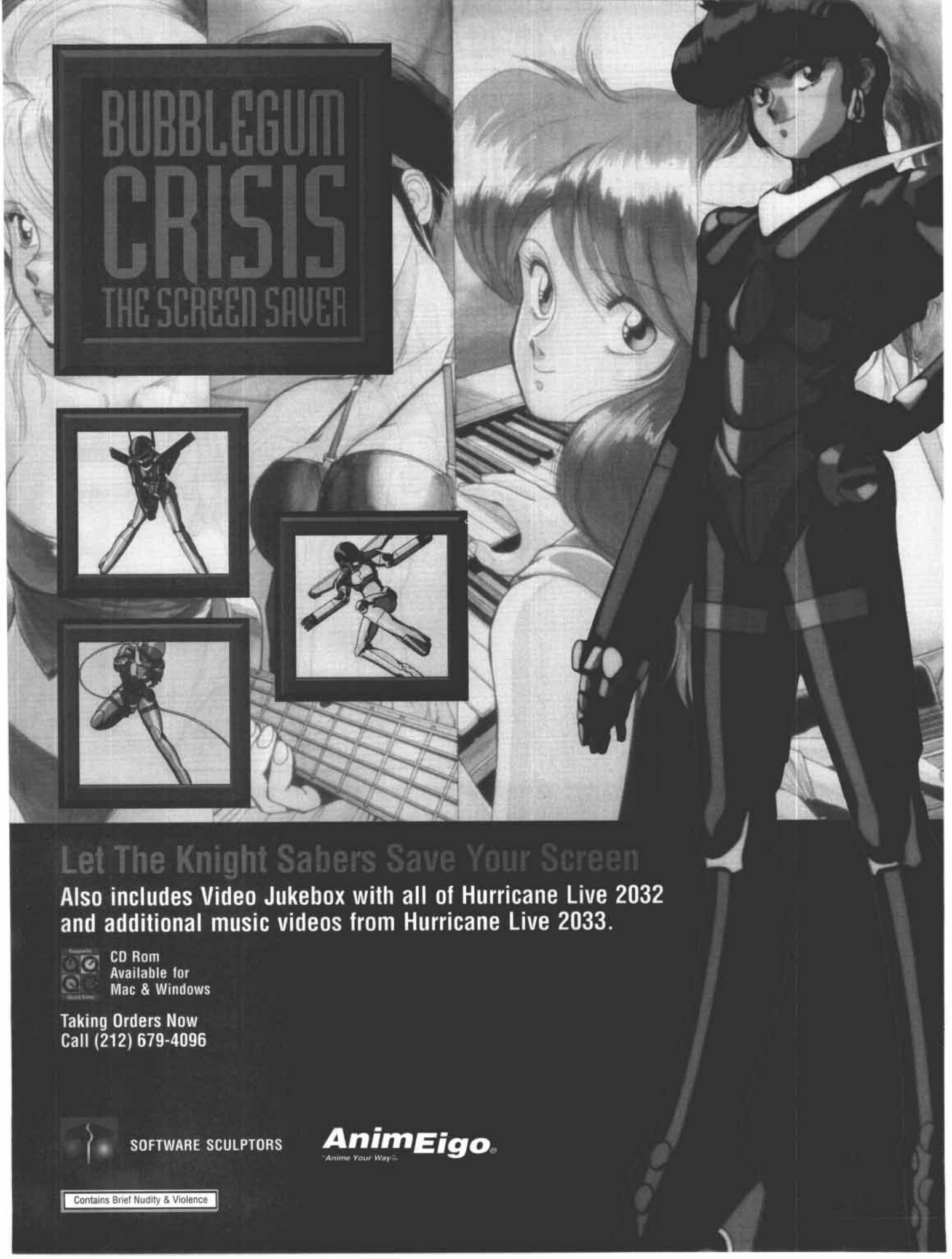
**WEAPONS AND AMMO:**

| Type | Loc | Crit | Tonnage |
|---|---|---|---|
| ER Large Laser | RT | 2 | 5 |
| Medium Laser | LA | 1 | 1 |

**Note:**
This design is loosely based on the GM Cannon, a mecha first featured in ***Mobile Suit Gundam***



Raymond P. Campiglio (Order # 33161643)

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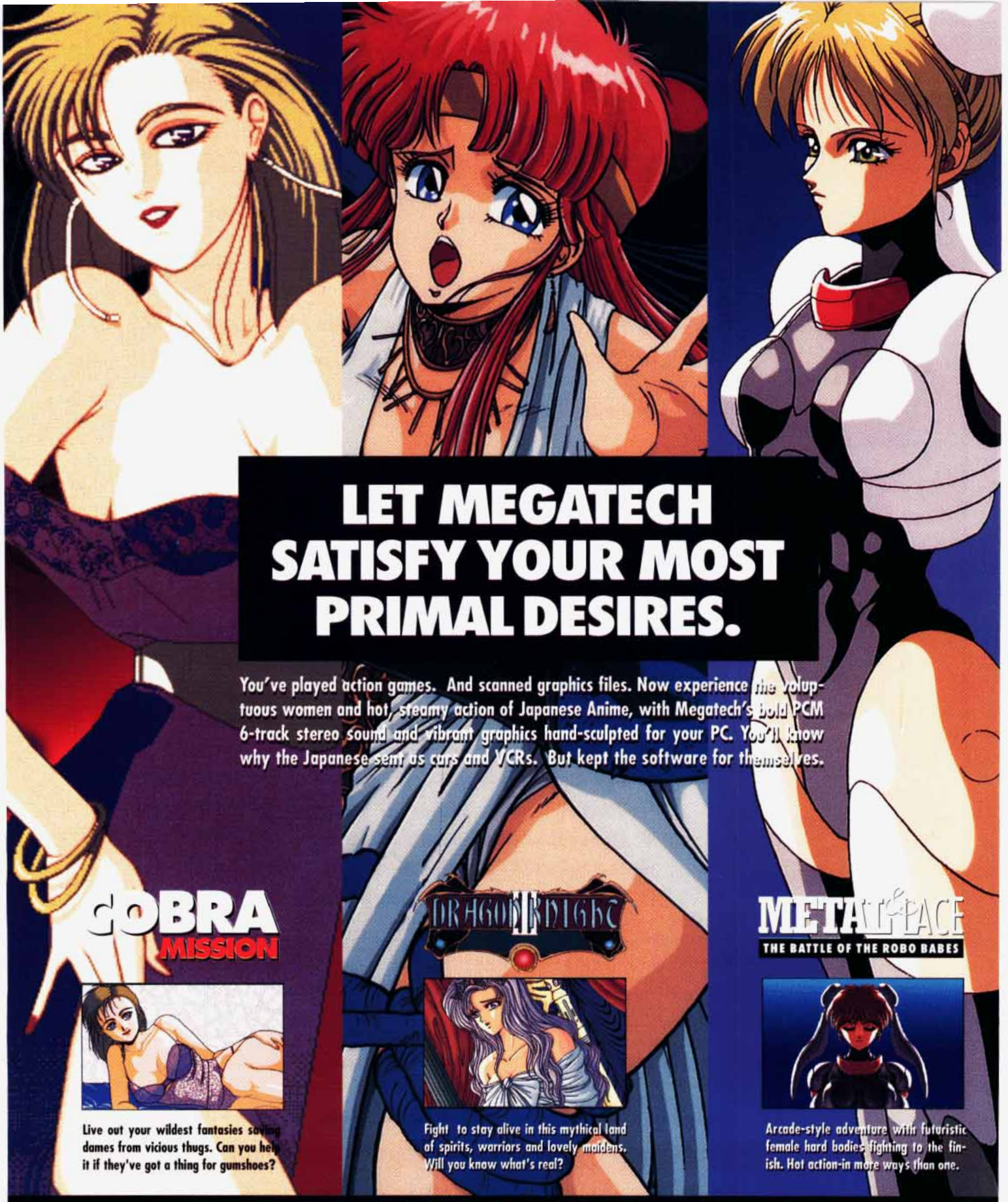

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